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ABSTRACT

This collection of conference papers explores aspects of the lives of German-American immigrants in Minnesota. Part 1, "The Ethnic Experience," consists of the following papers: "Was There a Single German-American Experience?" (Bonney); "The Most Diversified Ethnic Group" (Johnson); "Unraveling the Mystery of Ethnic Identity" (Ward); and "Some General Questions Concerning the Maintenance of Ethnicity" (Bradunas). Part 2, "Architectural Styles and Material Culture," consists of the following papers: "Patterns and Marks of German Settlement in Minnesota" (Rippley); "The Minnesota Valley Restoration Project" (MacFarlane); "A Rejection of Traditional German Forms" (Harvey); and "Material Artifacts Reflect People's Lives" (Stanton). Part 3, "Religious and Language Experiences," includes "Religious and Language Experiences of German-Catholic Americans" (Barry); "Cultural Integrity and the Role of Religion" (Kloberdanz); "Alternate Research Strategies" (Graebner); and "Ethnicity and Religion: The German-American Experience" (Rankin). Part 4, "Politics and Education," consists of: "The German-American Role in Minnesota Politics, 1850-1950" (Chrislock); "The Motives of German Immigration" (Cofell); "German Allegiance to the Democratic Party" (Noblitt); and "Political Myths and the Realities of Assimilation" (Conzen). A summary and text of a German and English chapel service, an extensive bibliography of German heritage in Minnesota, and an extensive collection of photographs are included. (APG)

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A Heritage Deferred:

The German-Americans in Minnesota

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A Heritage Deferred: The German-Americans in Minnesota

Edited with an Introduction by Clarence A. Glasrud,
assisted by Diana M. Rankin

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A special thanks to Lutheran Brotherhood for publishing this volume and to the Minnesota Humanities Commission and the National Endowment for the Humanities for funding the conferences which generated the papers.

COVER

The ink drawing on the cover, depicting a German immigrant cabin near New Germany in Carver County, was moved to and reconstructed at Lager Waldsee, Concordia German Language Village, Bemidji, Minnesota. Dave Hetland, director of communications, Concordia College, designed the cover and layout of the book. Kay Weller and Joann Paradise of Minneapolis, provided technical services.

Papers written for the Two Conferences on the German-American Heritage: at Moorhead, Minnesota, October 12, 1979, and St. Paul, Minnesota, October 19-20, 1979.

Letters from Senators Rudy Boschwitz and Dave Durenberger and the Honorable Peter Hermes, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Preface by Odell M. Bjerkness and Christian Skjervold, Co-directors of the German-Americans in Minnesota Conference.

Chapel Service at Concordia College in the German language (with parallel English translation): homily *(Andacht)* and introduction by Norbert G. Benzel. 4

A Heritage Deferred: The German-Americans in Minnesota

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Senator Rudy Boschwitz

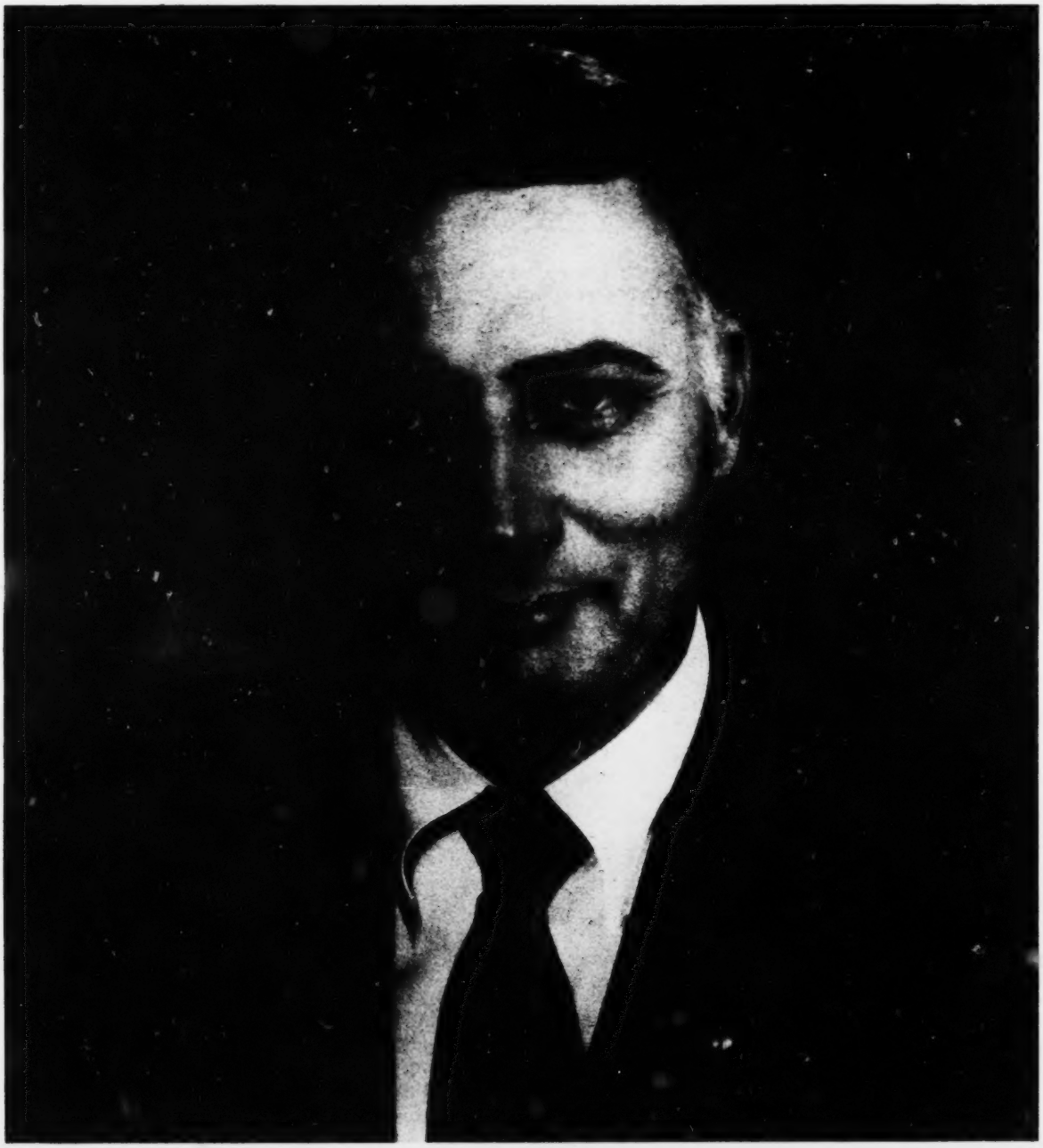
Several of the conference papers in this collection cite the election (in November, 1978) of two United States Senators with distinctive German names as a significant event in Minnesota history. Even though there are more Minnesotans of German descent than Norwegians or Swedes, a Scandinavian name was considered a great political asset, and few German-Americans had ever been elected to the highest political offices in the state. Because this conference was predicated on the thesis that the German-American heritage in Minnesota should be deferred no longer, we asked for and received the following reactions from Senators Boschwitz and Durenberger.

From Senator Rudy Boschwitz:

"Congratulations on your efforts to explore the heritage of the Germans in Minnesota. I commend you on your endeavor and wish you much success.

"I am sure this publication will be a treasure to all those of German descent who now live in our great state. As an immigrant to this country myself, I can appreciate the desire to explore one's ancestry.

"Although we are now brothers and sisters in one nation, it is good for us to study where we came from and why we came to America. I applaud your publication which will bring this information to the many interested Minnesotans."



Senator David Durenberger

From Senator Dave Durenberger:

"My German heritage is a matter of great pride to me. America's greatness is built on its ancestral roots. We have melded different cultures, taking the best of each, to forge a strong and vital citizenry.

"German Americans have contributed a great deal to this vitality. In this first year of a new decade it is appropriate that we are embarking on the future with a reexaminaton of our past.

"A Heritage Deferred: The German-Americans in Minnesota is providing a great service to all Minnesotans by exploring the struggles and achievements of German-Americans and sharing their story with all people."

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THE AMBASSADOR
OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

May 1980

To the Editors of
"A Heritage Deferred: The Germans in Minnesota"

It is with pleasure that I comment on the laudible undertaking of your publication which makes last year's conference on the history of Germans in Minnesota accessible to a wider public.

This conference, the first of its kind in Minnesota, was dedicated to important contributions of German culture and language, science and religion to the United States, brought about by immigrants from my country. For the German Americans in Minnesota it is, indeed, a heritage worth remembering.

With best wishes for your future endeavours of historic research and preservation, and with kind greetings for the German American community in Minnesota from the "old country", I am,

Sincerely yours,

Peter Hermes

Mr. and Mrs. Don Padilla of Minnetonka, Minn. (second and third from right), donated a German immigrant log cabin to the Language Villages. Pictured with them at the dedication services are William Schleppegrell, former dean of the village; Wolfgang Schnitzler, village counselor; Al Traaseth, coordinator of the Language Village programs; Harry Peterson of Lutheran Brotherhood; Ed Ellenson, former vice president of Concordia College; and, far right, Odell Bjerkness, director of the Language Villages.

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Preface

A state-wide conference on the German heritage in Minnesota — long a desired but nebulous goal — emerged as a concrete possibility a year ago at Concordia College. A number of people interested in general ethnicity, German heritage and language, and curriculum development came together under the aegis of Concordia's International Language Village program to discuss the development of a vehicle for the expression of German-American ethnicity which would have validity for both scholars and lay persons. The Language Village program, which now has summer camps in seven languages, began nearly two decades ago with a German "village" at a Minnesota lake campsite. Since then, refinements in the German curriculum of these summer camps led naturally to the 1979 conference.

At *Lager Waldsee* (The German Language Village, which had its first camp in the summer of 1961), American students are introduced to the

Die Wandertour at St. John's University.

German language through contact with teachers and native speakers of German. In the 1970s an additional impetus to an exploration of Minnesota's German heritage was provided by *Die Wandertour* (a mobile language experience), which took students on a 500-mile tour through areas of significant German heritage in Minnesota. This innovation provided the greatest spur to the Language Village interest in the "deferred heritage." When the curriculum was being prepared for the bicycle language-culture tour, it was found that even though many areas of Minnesota are known as German, the "Germanness" was often ill defined.

Germans and German-speakers are the largest single ethnic group in Minnesota. Statistics show that as recently as 1970 approximately 8.3% of the state population still spoke German as their mother tongue. More significantly, approximately 58% of those who use German as their mother tongue were born of parents who were also born in the United States. Census data reports nativity only to the second generation, and since Germans were among the earliest

Familiar sights at the German Village.

settlers in the state it is difficult to arrive at the size of the German ethnic group today. Various estimates have placed the German heritage figure at between 20-35% of Minnesota's 3.8 million population. If one uses the mother tongue figure of 8.3% for the language use, the inference may be drawn that Germans have retained their language more than most groups in the state.

But the problem which immediately became apparent in viewing "The German Experience in Minnesota" is that the Germans, even more markedly than other immigrant groups, have as many "experiences" as there are individuals in the group. Some Minnesota German-Americans, who trace their ancestry back to Austria, Switzerland, or Luxembourg, are German only in language. Many others had immigrant forefathers who emigrated to America from Baden, Prussia, Bavaria, or Westphalia before these principalities were absorbed into a German nation in 1871.

If there is no one German-American experience, there are some shared realities with which many German-speaking Americans can identify. The day-to-day efforts of immigrants — to adapt to or at least come to an accommodation with a new land, or the struggle to make a living, or to learn a new language in an unfamiliar environment — are certainly conditions which many faced. Further, in the case of German-Americans, there were the effects of the two World Wars in which the "Old Country" and the adopted land were pitted against each other. The German-American experience is replete with examples of people who anglicized their names or denied their heritage in countless other ways. Hence, "The Heritage Deferred."

If one were to listen to the radio in Minnesota, one could draw the conclusion that this is a Scandinavian state. This would not be because of the languages used but rather the amount of time spent on Scandinavian dialect humor. Further, the political structure of the state has a large share of Scandinavian names; by

numbers within the state, the Germans should have contributed an equally large number of governors, senators, and representatives. Certainly, when one examines certain enclaves, the German influence is strong — New Ulm comes easily to mind — but on a general basis Minnesota is not known as a German state. The disparity between the actual German population and the "Germanness" of the state can be ascribed to a desire for a "privateness" in the maintenance of the heritage.

This disparity between the numerical size of the group and the apparent inactivity of the German-Americans raised a number of questions in the minds of scholar-teachers concerned with language and heritage. Several preliminary meetings were held, which involved representatives of German ethnic organizations, students of immigration and language, as well as professional and lay persons from historical societies. At these meetings, questions were raised which focused on the evidence of retention of German ethnicity. As a result of these discussions, it was decided that a state-wide conference should be held on German heritage.

A wide range of groups supported this effort. Besides the International Language Villages of Concordia College, the conference that emerged had many co-sponsors: the Educational Division of the Minnesota Historical Society, Upper Midwest Ethnic

Many approaches are used to teach language at Lager Waldsee.

Studies Association, Carver County Historical Society, Minnesota Folklife Center, International Institute of Minnesota, Modern and Classical Languages section of the Minnesota State Department of Education, Minnesota Project on Ethnic America, *Volksfest* Association of Minnesota, Brown County Historical Society, *Der Deutsche Klub*, St. Olaf College Department of German, Minnesota Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German, and World Affairs Center of the University of Minnesota.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1979, planning went on which involved representatives of many of these groups and organizations. As a result of this planning, a proposal was submitted to The Minnesota Humanities Commission for their consideration. The proposal was accepted and funded, and the two October conferences were held in Moorhead and St. Paul. Subsequently the Goethe Foundation funded a follow-up workshop for teachers of German, which was held at Concordia College in December. Printing of these conference papers is supported by the Lutheran Brotherhood and the Minnesota Humanities Commission.

The programs were funded to give an overview of problems unique to the German-American experience, but including an attempt to integrate those problems into the larger immigration, settlement, and societal concerns of Minnesota. This was to be accomplished through consideration of specific topics within the areas of religion, culture and language, personal and community identity, process and artifacts of material culture, education, and politics.

The conference was designed to provide stimulating, thought-provoking examples of a humanistic framework into which the public could integrate their own or the general German-American experience. Through the suggested framework, the public was invited to view that experience as a part of a broader ethnic experience. The conference was also to provide a vehicle for active exploration of the German-American presence in Minnesota as evidenced through various mediums provided by the disciplines of history, sociology, political science, literature, and folklife (including music and dance, art and architecture, language and geography).

A very important issue that was never far beneath the surface of discussions, both at the planning sessions and at the conference proceedings, was how other groups perceived German-Americans. While the question was not directly confronted in depth, there were remembrances of legal restrictions which had been placed on the practice of German-American heritage by both state government and federal bodies in the course of world hostilities. This legacy of suspicion of any group or individuals different from the perceived majority or "mainstream" is still with us today. The suspicion of the inter-war period no longer affects most German-Americans, but there are lessons to be gained from the exploration of that historical experience which may have ramifications for the future.

Today we assume that German-Americans have been merged into the homogenized mainstream of American life. Language has become American English, and the values of these immigrants have become the values of middle America. Little thought has been given to the reservoir of cultural and linguistic retention within the community. A further implication lies in the concept that perhaps much of what we perceive as a middle American culture system can be traced to those immigrant values and identities which came to Minnesota with various groups — and among those, the Germans.

Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Odell M. Bjerkness
Christian Skjervold

Odell M. Bjerkness and Christian Skjervold planned and directed the Conference on the German-Americans in Minnesota. Bjerkness, Associate Professor of Modern Language at Concordia College, is the director of the International Languages Villages and the May Seminars Abroad. Skjervold heads the Ethnic Cultural Center of the Minneapolis Public Schools and is the former president of the Upper Midwest Ethnic Studies Association.

Introduction

A Heritage Deferred: the German-Americans in Minnesota should probably have an added phrase — except that the title would become too long and cumbersome. The added words would read, "And Other States." Some of the essays in this compendium, in dealing with ethnicity and the German-American heritage, refer to Minnesota hardly at all. Nearly all of the papers — although they cite Minnesota statistics, places, and people — discuss aspects of the German immigration to America that are generally true for the whole United States. Indeed, they are also true for the whole immigration and assimilation process — at least the migration of northern Europeans to the Middle West in the nineteenth century.

But one of the important justifications for this kind of conference is that our generalizations about immigration and assimilation may be false, or only partly true. The best way to check and correct such assumptions is to go back to the original source material and data: census reports (including the original manuscripts from which the statistics were compiled), contemporary newspaper accounts, letters and diaries of the immigrants, and the like. Looking at such material, which will be local and detailed, can open new areas of investigation.

The major paper in each of the four sections usually includes a very considerable body of such matter: on Minnesota German-American family life-style; on houses, farm buildings, commercial and public buildings; on religious traditions; and on voting patterns and political involvement. The "big" paper also draws some conclusions; the "reactor" papers that follow may not add new material but will pass judgment on the kind of research done and the validity of the conclusions drawn. It is well to remember that the reactor may view this evidence from the perspective of another discipline and may also have a different set of experiences to draw upon.

Not all investigators, even if they are looking at the same data, draw the same conclusions. When the participants in this German-American conference were selected, they were deliberately chosen from many fields: history, sociology, political science, geography, language and literature, cultural anthropology, psychology, theology and folklore — a new field that is currently giving special attention to ethnicity. Readers will find expressions of surprise that "an anthropologist and a historical geographer can agree." And the system of the conference — a presenter followed by several reactors — is intended to expose all findings and generalizations about the German-Americans to immediate scrutiny. Some disagreement and considerable variety in approach will be noted.

The Participants

Because the focus was on the German-Americans in Minnesota, most of the presenters and reactors were found within the state, or had Minnesota backgrounds — but not all. And most of the participants had some German blood or German "connections" — but not all. Taken all together, they incorporate a considerable breadth of experience and background, as a close look at them will reveal.

Hildegard Binder Johnson (historical geographer), Norbert Benzel and Gerhard Weiss (language and literature), and Elena Bradunas (folklorist) are German-born: but their very different origins warn us that "German" can mean many things. Timothy Kloberdanz (cultural anthropology and folklore) bears an obviously German name, and he is a descendant of Germans from Russia. Coming to the United States after Minnesota farmland had been taken up, the Russian-Germans settled farther west — on the High Plains, from Texas to the Canadian prairie provinces — and Tim Kloberdanz grew up on the eastern slope of Colorado. Alan Graebner (historian), whose name is also recognizably German, is descended from the pastor-leader of one of the German "colonies" established on Saginaw Bay, Michigan, in 1847. From this great-great-grandfather are descended a number of prominent German-American Lutheran clergymen.

At the opposite extreme from Kloberdanz, whose German forefathers came to America in this century, is Harding Noblitt (political science); one of his grandmothers claimed to be "pure Pennsylvania Dutch," though her ancestors came to America from Germany more than 250 years ago. He was born and raised in North Carolina, but has been a Minnesotan for three decades. Russell Fridley (history) and La Vern Rippley (language and literature) have names that sound as non-German as Noblitt; yet Fridley (who grew up in Iowa) says his ancestry is essentially German, and Rippley's name was Americanized from "Rieple" when his family migrated from Baden to Wisconsin in 1863. Rachel Bonney (cultural anthropology) traces her German ancestry to great-great-grandfather Rudolph Knapheide, who migrated from Westphalia first to Missouri in 1846 and then to Ramsey County, Minnesota, in 1850. She grew up on a part of the original homestead that was once Rudolph Knapheide's experimental vineyard. Diana Rankin (folklorist) comes from a German farming community in Nebraska; her maiden name is Oestmann.

Both Kathleen Neils Conzen (historian) and William Cofell (education and rural sociology) have their roots in Stearns County, Minnesota's German-

American center. But Cofell can count only one German ancestor: his grandmother, Anna Wilhelmina Salzsieder, was born in Pomerania in 1872 and came to the United States a hundred years ago. Conzen, who grew up in non-ethnic St. Paul, counts German ancestors "from the Mosel to Pomerania." She has done research on immigration history in Milwaukee as well as rural Minnesota.

Thomas Harvey (historical geographer) and Don Ward, Gary Stanton, and Willard Moore (folklorists) all have impeccably Anglo-Saxon names. Ward is a Californian, Stanton an Indiana Hoosier; Moore and Harvey are Minnesotans by recent adoption. Stanton has done work with German communities in Indiana and Harvey in Texas; Ward and Moore have concentrated their folkloristic research on myths and legends and Ward has worked extensively in Germany. The names of Christian Skjervold (history) and Odell Bjerkness (language and literature) are as Norwegian as these others are English, but both of them direct programs aimed at preserving and rehabilitating Minnesota's ethnic heritage. Carl Chrislock (historian) bears a less obviously Norwegian name, but he has done impressive work on Norwegian immigration and assimilation, and on Minnesota political history.

Stigma Erased

The election (in November, 1978) of two U.S. senators from Minnesota with German names was a notable phenomenon, and a signpost. For nearly a century it has been assumed that a Scandinavian name was a political asset of almost overriding importance in Minnesota. Rudy Boschwitz — German-born and Jewish — was convinced that his origins would penalize him in a Minnesota election, but they did not. Some of the papers in this collection begin with comments on the election of Boschwitz and Durenberger, which allegedly signaled the end of any stigma attached to "Germanness" in Minnesota.

Conference participants also pointed out that Senator Durenberger's mother was of Polish descent and that Senator Eugene McCarthy's mother came from a German-American family. Father Colman Barry confidently asserted that "Gene McCarthy loves the German part of himself more than the Irish." Father Barry, who is of Irish ancestry, suggests that the Irish-dominated Catholic hierarchy may have done real harm to the Catholic faith in America in the nineteenth century, by opposing the continuation of German-Catholic traditions in American churches.

Clearly, by 1980, blind prejudice and blind allegiance have been removed from a consideration of the German-Americans in Minnesota. In the hard-fought 1978 election campaign, the "Germanness" of the two Republican candidates for senator was not an issue and was scarcely commented upon. When St. John's University was established at Collegeville, Minnesota, in 1857 under the sponsorship of King Ludwig I of Bavaria, the king advised the founders to "stay German, take only Germans." A hundred years later the Irish-American Father Colman Barry served for a decade as president of St. John's.

This is a good time to examine the German-American heritage. It is clearly "a major heritage," for there are more Minnesotans of German descent than either Norwegian or Swedish in this "Scandinavian State of the Union," as Carl Chrislock points out. According to Kathleen Conzen, more immigrants came to the United States in the past 150 years from Germany than from any other area of the world. But whereas the Norwegian-American Historical Association has published more than 60 volumes about Norwegians in America since 1925, there has been no similar effort among German-Americans. Their immigrant story is relatively unexplored and unrecorded.

Earning high school credit in German at Lager Waldsee.

Not completely, of course. For four decades Hildegard Binder Johnson has been looking closely at the German-American experience in Minnesota and has published scholarly accounts of her findings. In examining pre-Civil War voting patterns, she went behind the printed records to the manuscript sources they were based upon. Several papers in this collection refer to her pioneering work, which has prompted some re-evaluations and suggests that more such investigating needs to be done.

Nearly thirty years ago, Father Colman Barry published an important national study: *The Catholic Church and German Americans.* This may account for his insistence that the problems of German-American Catholics in Minnesota are no different than elsewhere in the nation. But other Barry publications — e.g. a history of the German Benedictine abbey at Collegeville and Catholic Minnesota — remind us that he is especially interested in the Minnesota-German experience and knowledgeable about it. The conference presentation Barry made in Moorhead and St. Paul revealed his concern.

Professor La Vern Rippley has recently brought out a widely circulated book for the general American reader: *The German-Americans.* But Rippley has also published dozens of articles — both scholarly and popular — that examine such details of the German experience (mostly in Minnesota) as their barns, newspapers, banks, and breweries. It was one premise of this conference on the German-American heritage that a close look at the politics, religion, and architecture of these immigrants to Minnesota might show some stereotypes to be false images and might prompt a new interest in, and investigation into, the true nature of the German-American experience in Minnesota — and elsewhere.

An Artificial Image

A half dozen papers point out that the popular image of Germans in modern-day America is essentially artificial and almost entirely wrong — deriving more from Hollywood than Germany. It has to be wrong because "German" is such a large and diversified cultural, ethnological, and linguistic entity. The present-day image *must* be an artificial creation because Germans have been so thoroughly assimilated into American life that they have long since lost the cultural baggage they brought with them from the Old World. But they did not lose it carelessly or willingly. German-American assimilation was often coerced and painful; it is widely recognized that the same Germans who lost their Old World traditions came to the United States determined to preserve them.

Taken together, these papers will explain how and why this came about. The Commission of Public Safety set up by the Minnesota legislature in April, 1917, was so super-patriotic and heavy-handed that scars are still felt among Minnesota German-Americans — more than sixty years later. The Commission discouraged the teaching of German — even at St. John's University; they removed the public officials at New Ulm for supporting an amendment to the draft law that would limit service in Europe to volunteers. A Minnesota newspaper regretted that the Indian attack on New Ulm in 1862 had not been fully successful. The whole story is much more complex — involving such issues as prohibition and the insurgent political movements that swept into Minnesota with the Nonpartisan League triumph in North Dakota and the La Follette ascendency in Wisconsin. Professor Chrislock tells this story in some detail, and the papers that follow his point out other aspects of the German-American dilemma in politics.

Out of these four papers in Part IV comes one obvious conclusion: the charge that German-Americans were not interested in politics, or were politically inept, needs re-examination. The participants agree that their political aims and involvement were different from those of the Irish, and even of the Scandinavians. But a new respect for the German-Americans politically and a new understanding of their problems will come from the essays.

Some readers of these collected papers may need background information about recent German history and of American immigration history that none of the conference participants thought worth mentioning. Actually, a good deal of factual matter is provided in these essays — especially in the presenter papers. But it may be well to add a little more, especially if it comes from a non-specialist editor. It is a safe assumption that if he is puzzled by a reference, or by circumstances that are not explained, the general reader will be also. Some terms referred to — like the National Survey and *Kulturkampf* — need definition. And both the German and American forces that affected this immigration should be explained briefly.

A Brief History

Germany as a political entity stems from 1871 when the German Empire was created. This was a Prussian-dominated confederation of German states; most of them retained their royal families, and were still kings, grand dukes, and the like. However, nearly absolute power rested in the Prussian Hohenzollern emperors, who ruled with the support of a powerful military and industrial establishment. The new German Empire also had the allegiance of a comfortable and prosperous middle class; this group had been frightened by the proletarian radicalism of the idealists who had attempted a democratic unification of the German people in 1830 and again in 1848. The Austrian Hapsburgs still ruled an older empire from Vienna; but, though the royal family and their governing classes were German, this Austro-Hungarian Empire was heavily non-German in population. There were also large German minorities elsewhere in Europe, notably in the Baltic countries and in the Black Sea and Volga River regions of Russia. And Germans made up nearly three-fourths of the population of independent Switzerland.

Migration out of Germany had begun in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for religious, economic, and political reasons. The medieval Holy Roman Empire — a very loose confederation of German principalities — was torn apart by the Protestant Reformation. After 1555 the ruling prince of each German "state" could determine the religion of his people; thereafter, Lutherans, Catholics, and especially dissenting pietistic sects were forced to leave their German homelands if they would not accept the religion of their ruler. Economic distress drove others out following the Thirty Years War (1618-1648); the population was reduced from twenty-one million to thirteen million, and so many farms, villages, and towns were destroyed that living became virtually impossible in parts of Germany, notably the western provinces of Baden, the Palatinate (or *Pfalz*), and Westphalia.

The earliest emigration was to other parts of Europe, but by the 1680s Germans began migrating to America. The first settlers were the Pietists who

Villagers adopt German names when they arrive at the village.

established Germantown, now a section of Philadelphia, in 1683. In the next century Lutherans and Roman Catholics also migrated to America, most of them to Pennsylvania, but also to New York, North Carolina, and other colonies. By the Revolutionary War, there were at least 225,000 German-Americans. Rachel Bonney's paper in this collection describes (briefly) five or six "distinct and separate phases" of German migration to America, the first being this Colonial Period. The second "Post-Revolutionary Period" brought immigrants from western and southern Germany — "primarily laborers, tradesmen, and farmers" — to the Midwest. This was not a large movement and did not affect Minnesota, which was not yet open to white settlement.

But during this time events occurred in Germany that would have a bearing on the German migration to Minnesota. Napoleon humiliated the Germans by his brilliant victories over their armies in 1805 and 1806. Thereafter, until Waterloo, French domination grew progressively heavier; the result was a surge of liberalism and nationalism up to 1848, when German liberals discovered that idealism alone was not enough to create a unified German nation.

German Nationalism Emerges

While French troops still occupied much of Germany, Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852), a teacher and patriot in Berlin, organized societies of gymnasts (*Turnverein*): these "Turners" were actually a cult that combined physical discipline with Germanic patriotism and became a guild for the moral and political emancipation of the Fatherland. In the reactionary aftermath following the Congress of

The language and culture are also taught through individual and team sports.

Vienna, Jahn was imprisoned and the students' liberal and nationalistic *Burschenschaften* suppressed. The Karlsbad Decrees of 1819 instituted censorship and set up commissions to check subversion, especially in the universities. But revolutions in other parts of Europe triggered new activity in 1830, and especially in 1848. In that year an elected National Assembly met at Frankfurt and drew up a constitution for a unified Germany. By the following year the Assembly gave up its hopes for a democratic republic and offered the crown of a unified Germany to King Frederick William IV of Prussia, who declined to become a constitutional monarch (and to challenge the Austro-Hungarian Empire). Members of the Assembly discovered that they had no power, which still rested with the princes of the various states.

German nationalism survived this debacle, but German liberalism did not. Some supporters of this German "revolution" of 1848 fled to the United States, often to avoid imprisonment. One of the models the National Assembly had before it was the American Constitution. Earlier, other German idealists had gone to the United States; some after the Congress of Vienna began its reactionary moves in 1815, others when the Karlsbad Decrees suppressed all dissent in 1819, and still others after 1830, when small uprisings were put down in various German states. Some of these German refugees of the early nineteenth century brought their nationalism with them to the New World and attempted to found New Germanies in America. None of these ventures had much success, and by the time the "Forty-eighters" (or *Achtundvierziger*) crossed the Atlantic, the idea of a separate German state within the United States had been generally discredited.

However, there was one important attempt at a German colony in Minnesota: the founding of New Ulm by the German Land Association of Chicago and the Cincinnati Turner Society. La Vern Rippley's presentation describes this venture and other papers refer to it. Several papers tell us that most German immigrants did not come directly to the frontier areas where land could be obtained by homesteading, pre-emption, or inexpensive purchase; they came first to older Geman settlements, where they got help, advice, and a little Americanization. This was a common practice followed by other immigrants, certainly the Scandinavians. But the cumulative story told by these papers, which the writers refer to only in passing, is that German-Americans looked after each other. This clannishness hindered assimilation at first and no doubt provoked some resentment among non-Germans; but it also lessened the pain of uprooting and the problems of resettlement in a strange land. Their tendency to settle in family clusters has been referred to by some historians as "the stockade mentality." It worked well in settling new territory.

Most Germans who emigrated to America in the nineteenth century came as individuals or families and paid their own way. The earlier migration — from the 1680s through the American Revolution — had usually been group movements; whole communities came together because of religious intolerance. Some German princes sold their subjects as soldiers; other impoverished Germans were bound to sea-captains who transported them to the New World and then auctioned them in an American port. The buyers thus had indentured servants, who worked until they had redeemed the costs of their passage. This redemption system continued until 1819. But beginning slowly after 1800, more and more laborers and peasant farmers found their own independent ways to America — mostly to the central states from Ohio to Missouri, where new lands were opening up. One of them, Gottfried Duden, came to the new state of Missouri in 1824, stayed three years as a pioneer farmer, and then published an indealized account of his venture which influenced others to immigrate. A few years later (1833-34) Gustav Koerner, who visited the German

settlements from Ohio to Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa, indignantly refuted Duden's picture. It is worth noting that most nineteenth century German immigrants were literate, as these papers point out: they read and thought about America before emigrating. Later, American railroads, land companies, and even state immigration offices actively solicited emigration in many European countries. They sent over brochures and posters, ran advertisements, and employed agents to induce immigration.

The Role of the Forty-eighters

The educated German liberals who migrated to America were a small part of the huge nineteenth century influx, but their story has an importance and interest that goes far beyond their numbers. As pioneering settlers they were misfits and ridiculed as such: since they had more education than muscle and knowledge of farming, they were called "Latin farmers." As newspaper editors and leaders in many social and cultural activities, they were far more successful. They made important contributions to American life in many fields; even a list of names would indicate their importance to the new nation. There were a number of German generals in the Civil War, the most notable being Carl Schurz, who settled in Wisconsin and became an important Republican leader even before the war; these men had some military training and experience in Germany, including involvement in the unsuccessful revolts against the governments that defeated the efforts of the Frankfurt Assembly in 1848. But these "Forty-eighters" — a term commonly used for all German-American liberal-intellectuals — could not have organized a powerful German-block to influence American politics, even if they had wanted to (and their idealism would probably have dissuaded them from such pressure tactics).

In the minds of most German workers and peasants who made up the great mass of immigrants to America, these educated-liberal Germans were tainted with atheism (or agnosticism) and other noxious new ideas. In Germany they had been connected with the unification moves, social changes, and reform measures that had disrupted the Fatherland — even though other forces may have been responsible for them. The Napoleonic era had changed the patterns of land-holding and landlord-tenant relationships; the advancing industrial revolution made many crafts obsolete; and the unsettled policies of the various German states was partly responsible for a badly depressed economy up to the middle of the nineteenth century. There should be no mistake about the overriding motive for immigration, which was *economic*. Germany was just emerging from the old feudal system of landholding; the emancipation of the peasants now required that they pay cash rent for the land they farmed. As population increased and the small plots could not yield enough to sustain families, farmers began leaving the land. Germany lagged behind England and France in industrial development; and when there was no way to absorb this labor force in the growing towns and cities, emigration to America increased greatly.

It has been often stated and generally believed that Germans were not real pioneers and did not settle on a frontier that exposed them to Indian attack and extreme isolation. Some of the papers refer to this notion without challenge, but the story of New Ulm brands it as untrue. The most bitterly fought battles of the 1862 Sioux war on the white settlements in the Minnesota Valley were the repeated attacks on New Ulm, which was crowded with refugees. Nearly 200 buildings were burned and twenty-six defenders lost their lives; if the Indians had not been driven off, at least a thousand others (and perhaps many more) might have died. There were many German families among the five hundred white settlers who were surprised and killed on their scattered farms in August, 1862.

At Lager Waldsee, each day begins with a flag-raising ceremony.

The best available statistics show fewer than 8,000 Germans migrating to the United States in the 1820s, more than 150,000 in the 1830s, and nearly 450,000 in the 1840s. Most of them came from southwestern Germany — from Württemberg, Baden, and the Palatinate — but increasingly from the Rhineland and northwestern Germany. The numbers continued to grow in the 1850s, but slowed after the American economic depression of 1857 and during the Civil War.

Religious Pressures

Several papers mention German pressures on the Lutheran and Catholic churches in the nineteenth century as factors in the immigration. Although the old persecution of dissenters was no longer practiced, the system of established churches made problems. In 1817 the Prussian government decided that the Lutheran and Calvinistic (or Reformed) churches should combine and use a common liturgy, and the Hohenzollern King Frederick William III decreed that this be a rather colorful, "high church" liturgy that appealed to him. A body of "Old Lutherans," primarily from Saxony and Silesia, were allowed to withdraw from the state church to set up their own Evangelical Lutheran Church, but the government's interference with church liturgy and doctrine caused so much resentment that it contributed to the emigration to America. Diana Rankin refers to this fact in her mention of the Union Agenda of 1830.

After 1870 — when Prussian absorption of other territories had given them as many Catholic subjects as

Lutherans — the Roman Catholic Church felt the heavy hand of Hohenzollern interference. This resulted in the "May Laws" and *Kulturkampf* that Colman Barry refers to and explains. This complex issue is also discussed by Timothy Kloberdanz.

As many as 10,000 to 20,000 Germans may have immigrated to the United States as political exiles, but political resentment was no doubt a contributing factor in the emigration of many more. Just how much religious resentment contributed is harder to estimate, but it was a considerable factor, as some of the papers in this collection argue. Nineteenth century Germany was a confusing and rapidly changing world, and this very confusion and change drove out many Germans who sought a new land where they could establish their homes, farms, and families in peace. Historians agree that when they acquired land in America, these Germans frequently stayed where they settled. And their families stayed with them, which was not the pattern in the New World.

By the 1870s — and to some extent earlier — heavier taxes and compulsory military service became powerful motives for migration to America. By this time there were counterforces that kept some Germans in Bismarck's burgeoning German Empire: a nationalistic pride in the proud new German superpower and the prosperity engendered by a rapidly expanding industrial complex. However, Colman Barry is certainly right in asserting that "when the small land-owners, farm hands, domestic hand workers, and shop keepers found they had to abandon their traditional ways of life in a new military-industrial society, many saw their only hope of self-sufficiency and independence in emigration." After 1871, most of the immigrants to the United States came from the Prussian territories of northern and northeastern Germany.

Since most users of this collection know a good deal of American history — including the pattern of immigration and the westward movement — only two matters need be reviewed here: the Know-Nothing party and the National Survey, both referred to in several papers. Air travelers across the Middle West note the influence of the survey but probably do not know its origin. The ordinance of 1785 directed a federal survey. This U.S. rectangular survey organized land into six-by-six mile townships divided into thirty-six sections of one square mile each. A series of subsequent surveys — promoted early by Thomas Jefferson and continued as the nation expanded westward — imposed this rectangular pattern onto the landscape. One important result was that separate farmsteads, not nucleated settlements as in Europe, became the America way of life. A highly interesting study of the National Survey, focused upon Minnesota and some adjacent states, was published by Hildegard Binder Johnson in 1976 — *Order Upon the Land: The U.S. Rectangular Land Survey and the Upper Mississippi Country*. As she and others note in their papers, this land pattern imposed an American influence on the farming and living of the German-Americans — apparently without any resistance, even though their Old World experience had been quite different. The area Dr. Binder Johnson examines is "hill country," a complicated region to survey or farm. Nevertheless, according to the preface to *Order Upon the Land:*

> *Most Americans and Canadians accept the survey system that so strongly affects their lives and perception of the landscape in the same way that they accept a week of seven days, a decimal numerical system, or an alphabet of twenty-six letters — as natural, inevitable, or perhaps in some inscrutable way, divinely ordained.*

The Know-Nothing Party

As German immigration was nearing an intermittent peak (215,000 in 1854), a virulent nativist attack was launched against "the danger of foreign influence, threatening the gradual destruction of our national institutions." The first convention of the new American Party, held at Philadelphia on July 4, 1845, declared these principles. Members soon branded all people of foreign birth ignorant and immoral, also feeble, imbecile, idle, and intractable; but when questioned by outsiders, party members were instructed to reply, "I know nothing" — hence the Know Nothing label.

The flood of Irish immigrants, especially into New England and the large cities of the Northeast, explains the anti-Catholic animus of the Know-Nothing movement. About half of the growing German immigration was also Catholic, and the German-Americans were more conspicuously foreign than the Irish. While the Irish struck back, the Germans often endured the nativist attacks passively; but this treatment in the New World left indelible marks on many German-Americans, as these papers reveal.

An appraisal of the Know-Nothing movement in one of the newest and best-regarded histories of the United States makes two points worth noting here. By 1855 the party controlled most of New England — was strongest in the part of the nation where there were fewest German-Americans. Then this telling observation from Bernard Bailyn et al. *The Great Republic: A History of the American People* (Boston, 1977):

> *The spectacular triumphs of the Know-Nothing movement had less to do with a continuing anti-Catholic tradition than with a sudden popular yearning for change, for economic and cultural security, and for unity. Unity is most easily achieved by joining an alliance against people who are manifestly different. . . .Nativism had special appeal for artisans and manual workers who associated immigrants with a new and threatening America — an America of increasing urban poverty, of factories and railroads, of rising prices and abruptly changing markets . . . . Nativism was weaker in the old Northwest, where there was a greater tolerance for immigrants; in this region, they were largely of German and Scandinavian origin.*

We must conclude that the nativist bias against German-Americans had little real basis. It seems most probable that they came under attack primarily because they were so numerous, so obviously "foreign," and so innocently wrapped up in their Old

Country ways, that they failed to see the prim, puritanical reaction to their beer drinking — openly and boisterously — on Sundays! It was the Irish who provoked the Know-Nothings at mid-century and the Italians and eastern Europeans flooding into our large cities that triggered the America First movement at the end of the century. But the millions of "Dutchmen" busily contributing their substantial, teutonic best to the building of the great new transcontinental nation were victimized by this drive also.

The dances and music of Germany are an important part of village life.

American Nationalism

Before the turn of the century the German-Americans were caught up in a situation that was even more painful. The new American nationalism of the Spanish-American War period clashed with the emerging German nationalism of the Bismarck-directed German Empire. There is no question that many German-Americans felt a nostalgic, sentimental admiration for the saber-rattling Hohenzollern Kaisers. Unfortunately, this long-delayed nationalistic bias toward the Fatherland did not look innocent to many other Americans. Furthermore, many people in the United States — especially those descended from the older Anglo-Saxon stock — had drawn closer to their country of origin in the latter half of the nineteenth century. And the newly powerful American Republic of the post Civil War years discovered that its world-wide interest and policies were compatible with those of the British Empire. At the same time, that great empire was being challenged in Europe and around the world by the ambitious empire of Kaiser Wilhelm II, Queen Victoria's jealous grandson.

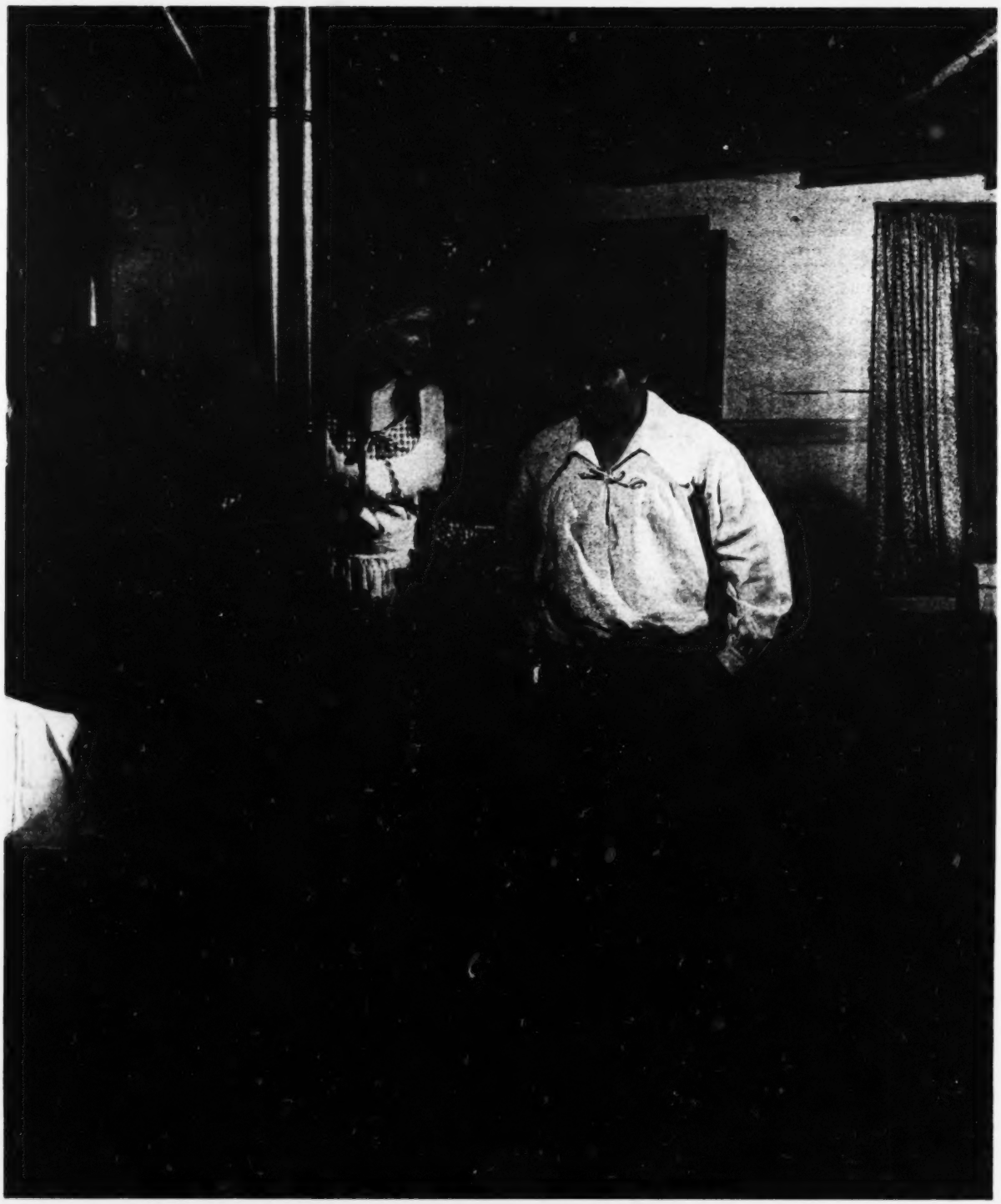
A strong anti-British sentiment had colored the first century of our existence as a nation. The first American military expeditions into what is now Minnesota were sent to tear down the British flags flying over fur trading posts in the Lake Superior and Upper Mississippi areas. But Canadian-American boundary disputes had been settled amicably and in our second century a "special relationship" grew up between the two nations who shared the same language. Thus it was easily possible for the British to enlist American sympathy first, then aid, and finally participation in both World Wars — and in both wars the prime enemy was Germany. This was a situation that should have had nothing to do with the thousands of Americans of German ancestry or birth living in Minnesota; but, through the working of human nature and human prejudice, these people became the innocent victims of a situation they could not have foreseen when they left their German homelands to settle in Minnesota.

The World War I hostilities hastened the assimilation of the huge German-American population into the mainstream of American life, which may be an unmitigated good brought about by the Americanizers with their blinders on. In the process a great deal of the German heritage was lost — even though some of it *may* be recoverable — and this has diminished the texture, quality, and depth of American culture. If the religious faith of German-Americans was also undermined and sometimes destroyed, that is an even greater loss.

The conference participants have been wonderfully patient in the process of getting their papers ready for the printers, and I wish to thank all of them for their indulgence and help. Diana Rankin has done a great many things that no one else could do and that do not "show" in the printed product. Finally, three fine secretaries have worked long and faithfully to get this job done and deserve special thanks. They are Kathleen Ruebke of the MSU Humanities Office, Dorothy Nance of the MSU English Office, and Janice Owings of the Concordia Language Villages Office.

Moorhead State University
Clarence A. Glasrud

Clarence A. Glasrud, now Professor Emeritus, was chairman of the English Department at Moorhead State University for twenty-three years and a member of the faculty from 1947 to 1977. His M.A. and Ph.D. were both from Harvard (in English). Earlier college work was at Moorhead State Teachers College (B.E. in English, history, French), the University of Minnesota (English and history), and Kenyon College (German and English). He edited *The Age of Anxiety* (Houghton Mifflin, 1960) and wrote *Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen: A Biographical and Critical Study* (Norwegian American Historical Association, 1963). Most recently he has published eleven essays on American writers in *Great Writers of the English Language* (St. Martin's Press, 1979) and is editing *A History of the Red River Valley* (as Director of Research for the Red River Valley Historical Society). He is associate editor of *Studies in American Fiction* (Boston) and on the board of editors of the Norwegian American Historical Association (Northfield, Minnesota). His research and writing concentrates on Midwestern writers and history and Norwegian-American immigration history and literature.



The Berger House, Minnesota Valley Restoration Project. (Michele Hutton, John Hutton)

Part I.
The Ethnic Experience: German-Americans in Minnesota

Each of the "presenter papers" is rather lengthy and packed with matter, with good reason, and this one especially. Rachel Bonney begins by explaining what an "ethnic group" is. Before she examines the German-American heritage, she warns that the story will be complex: "The reality of the 'German' experience in Minnesota is that there was no one 'German' experience but a variety of experiences." This assertion is followed by a brief but systematic history of the "five or six separable phases of German immigration to America." Next Dr. Bonney discusses the varied regions, dialects, and religions of Germany that were involved in the many-faceted settlement of Minnesota.

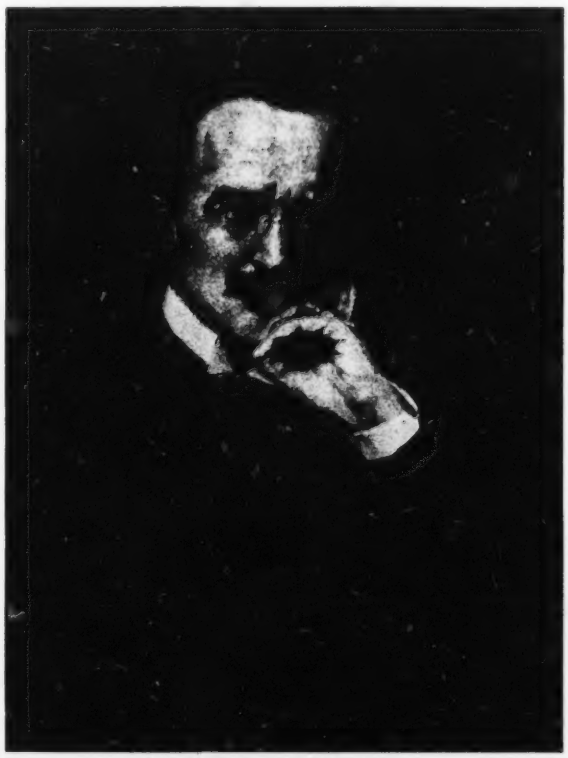
Rachel Bonney supports her generalizations by describing particular pioneer communities in Minnesota and the experiences of individual German-Americans. At times drawing from her own Knapheide family history, she cites letters, anecdotes, food-processing, and social customs in an explanation of German "clannishness." Family, regional, and religious ties were all-important, not only in the earliest settlements but for many generations thereafter.

This "presenter paper" is far-reaching in scope as well as particular and detailed in supporting evidence. German schools and language retention are considered, as well as newspapers, social societies, and festivals. Political behavior and settlement patterns are mentioned: individual differences are noted and some generalizations are challenged. Bonney sums up the factors that made for variety, not uniformity, in the Minnesota-German experience. Finally, she comments on the modern stereotypes, the new symbols of German ethnicity; she concludes that these "are usually based on what outsiders expect to see German-Americans doing or wearing."

Don Ward finds some of these new "symbols of ethnicity" grotesque; some German-Americans have been so thoroughly assimilated that their "German heritage" has to be derived from books — or Hollywood. But "the mystery of ethnic identity" is worth unraveling, if we can find reliable data to work with: old records, histories of individual families, and the like. "Folklorists," says Ward, "have learned how to penetrate the surface of oral accounts of personal histories to find the meanings that they harbor."

Hildegard Binder Johnson — who surveys, adds to, and agrees with the presenter's essential points — writes of the German-Americans with full confidence. Her own research on the German immigration spans four decades: the bibliography appended to these papers lists many of her publications. Significantly, this distinguished historical geographer warns us that the Sears Roebuck catalogue and the rectangular land survey may have influenced German-American farms in Minnesota more than traditions brought from Europe. Furthermore, she says that some ethnic behavior that has been considered typically German "may be . . . characteristic of most northwestern and central Europeans during the second half of the nineteenth century."

Elena Bradunas also warns that "every individual has many facets to his identity, and ethnicity is just one of them." Bradunas speaks in general terms about the German-American heritage, because her own ethnic background is Lithuanian and not connected with Minnesota. She refers to the ethnic reawakening of recent years — its possibilities and problems; and she says that ethnic groups can learn from each other in deciding what to perserve and how best to do it. What we learn through ethnic study may provide "keys to attitudes and behavior" in groups and communities. She points out (as other conference participants had also suggested) that "many German-American communities, like other groups, have far to go before their grassroots history is well documented."



Johanne E. Oberhoffer,
founder of what has become the Minnesota Orchestra.

Was There a Single German-American Experience?

by Rachel A. Bonney

The United States is basically a nation of immigrants. The entire population of the United States today is composed of persons who have immigrated or whose ancestors immigrated. The only distinction is how long ago their ancestors immigrated (more than 30,000 years ago for the Native Americans), and the countries of origin. Many members of this diverse population continue to identify with their country or culture of origin, and with other persons who share this past and tradition. These groups today are referred to as ethnic groups.

However, the definition of ethnic group is difficult and varied. There are probably as many definitions of ethnic groups as there are ethnic groups; conversely, the number of ethnic groups recognized may depend upon the definition of the phenomenon.

For purposes of this paper, an ethnic group is defined as "a social group whose membership is based on race, religion, national origin, or any combination of these." Membership is based on self-ascription, and on ascription by others (both members and non-members of the ethnic group) on the basis of behavioral, verbal, and other cues given by the individual. Inclusive and exclusive criteria are determined by boundary-maintaining mechanisms such as the identity system, shared symbols, and shared common cultural traditions and historical events. Overt signs of ethnic group membership include such things as language, clothing, house form, religious life, participation in rituals and acceptance of certain sacred symbols, and a general life style which may set the individual apart from the rest of the society. Less obvious — but perhaps more pervasive and more important for self-ascription and ascription by other members of the ethnic group — is a set of basic value orientations or standards of morality and excellence, which often are perpetuated through the language and through family institutions.

It is the purpose of this conference to discuss the ethnic experience and ethnic heritage of the Germans in Minnesota. Such a topic or title assumes that there were individuals in Minnesota who shared a common identity as German-Americans, basic symbols of their ethnic identity which are derived from common cultural traditions, historical events, and languages. The reality of the "German" experience in Minnesota is that there was no one "German" experience but a variety of experiences; these depended upon such factors (among others) as the historical time frame and reasons for emigration, the regions in Germany from which the immigrants came, the language or dialect which they spoke, the religion which they practiced, and the areas in Minnesota where they settled.

German Immigration and a "Shared Culture History"

There have been approximately five or six distinct and separable phases of German immigration to America, each of which has been characterized by different reasons for emigration, different emigration experiences, and different patterns of adjustment, acculturation, and assimilation.

The Colonial Period. Colonial period immigration was primarily of Protestant Pietist sects from the Pfalz (or Palatine) areas of Germany. These were groups like the Quakers and Mennonites who settled *Deutschtadt* (later known as Germantown), Pennsylvania; the *Tunker* (Dunkards), also in Pennsylvania; the United Brethren or Moravians, who settled in Pennsylvania and North Carolina; and other groups which settled in the Hudson Valley of New York, in New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and Georgia.[1] These early immigrants came primarily for religious reasons, and many of them settled in isolated religious communities — which hindered eventual assimilation.

Post-Revolutionary Period. The period following the American Revolution, lasting until the mid-1840s, was characterized by immigration from western and southern Germany. Immigrants were primarily laborers, tradesmen, and peasants who settled as farmers and businessmen in the Midwest and along the East Coast seeking a better life.

The Forty-Eighters. The third major wave of immigration lasted from about 1848 to 1866, the period known as the immigration of the "Forty-Eighters," political refugees who fled Germany after efforts to unify Germany had failed. They tended to settle in cities as journalists, white-collar workers, and businessmen. The Forty-Eighters were often well-educated professional men — doctors, teachers, lawyers, editors, artists, musicians — who came without families or baggage, knowing little English but conversant in several other languages, and well-informed about political and social conditions in the United States so that they became active in American politics. Due to strong feelings of German identity and to the rising wave of nativism in the mid-nineteenth century, assimilation of these German-Americans, the so-called "hyphenated Germans," was slow.[2]

Pre-World War I Period. From 1866 to World War I the immigrants tended to be individuals emigrating of their own free will, seeking economic betterment, not exiles. Generally, they came from the

working class but were better educated than most contemporary immigrants. They tended to assimilate more rapidly than the Germans who immigrated in the period between the 1820s and the 1860s, partly because they had not experienced the nativism of American politics of the 1850s and 1860s.

Post-World War I Period and World War II. Emigrants coming after World War I but prior to World War II did not share the experiences of those who had gone through the war in the United States, experiences of discrimination, legislation against Germans and German-American organizations, legislation forcing German-language schools to close and prohibiting German from being spoken in public, experiences of teachers losing their jobs because they were German-Americans, and some cases of German-Americans being tarred and feathered, beaten and even killed. During World War I, sauerkraut became "liberty cabbage," German street and place names were changed to English names, and many family names were anglicized. German-American ethnicity was denied, and German-Americans assimilated rapidly to avoid claims that they were pro-German and anti-American.

During and after World War II, German immigration was a direct result of the war. Many refugees were German Jews and other Germans seeking freedom and asylum from the oppressions of Nazi Germany. The cultural background from which they came was vastly different from those of earlier immigrants, who had not shared the experience of Nazi persecutions nor the technological and social changes in a unified Germany. Many of these immigrants were also educated professional people.

The Present. A sixth period of German immigration may be said to have started about the 1950s and continues to the present. Generally, these are well-educated Germans who know English at the time of their immigration and who seem to become assimilated into the American culture and structure very rapidly.

German immigrants began coming to Minnesota even before it was a territory; Germans helped to settle Minnesota. Those who came during the territorial days usually did not come directly to Minnesota as immigrants but came from other German settlement areas like Ohio, Wisconsin, and Missouri, where land was becoming scarcer and more expensive. The German pioneers settled on rural farmsteads as a rule. Later waves of immigrants settled in both rural and urban communities, but they did not share the same experiences as the territorial pioneers.

Regional Variations. Prior to about 1871, Germany was not politically unified. It was composed of numerous small states competing with each other for supremacy: Prussia, Bavaria, Weimar, Württemberg, Hanover, Nassau, and Hesse-

August Trieglaff and Family. Herr Trieglaff was born at Falkenberg, Germany, in 1831. In 1871 he homesteaded in Burlington Township, Becker County.

Rudolph Knapheide

Darmstadt, for example.[3] Immigrants did not consider themselves German. Their personal loyalties and identities were situational and varied, beginning with neighborhoods or kinship units, expanding to *Gemeinde* or administrative districts, counties, provinces, and small states. Census records showing places of birth for German immigrants during the early days of Minnesota's history do not show "Germany" but such places as "Prussia," "Westphalia," and "Bavaria." There has also been a tendency to lump all German-speaking immigrants together as German-Americans, so that Austrians, German Swiss, and the Luxemburg Germans in Minnesota were considered "German-Americans" by non-Germans, though the immigrants themselves continued to recognize the regional and national distinctions not perceived by the dominant society.

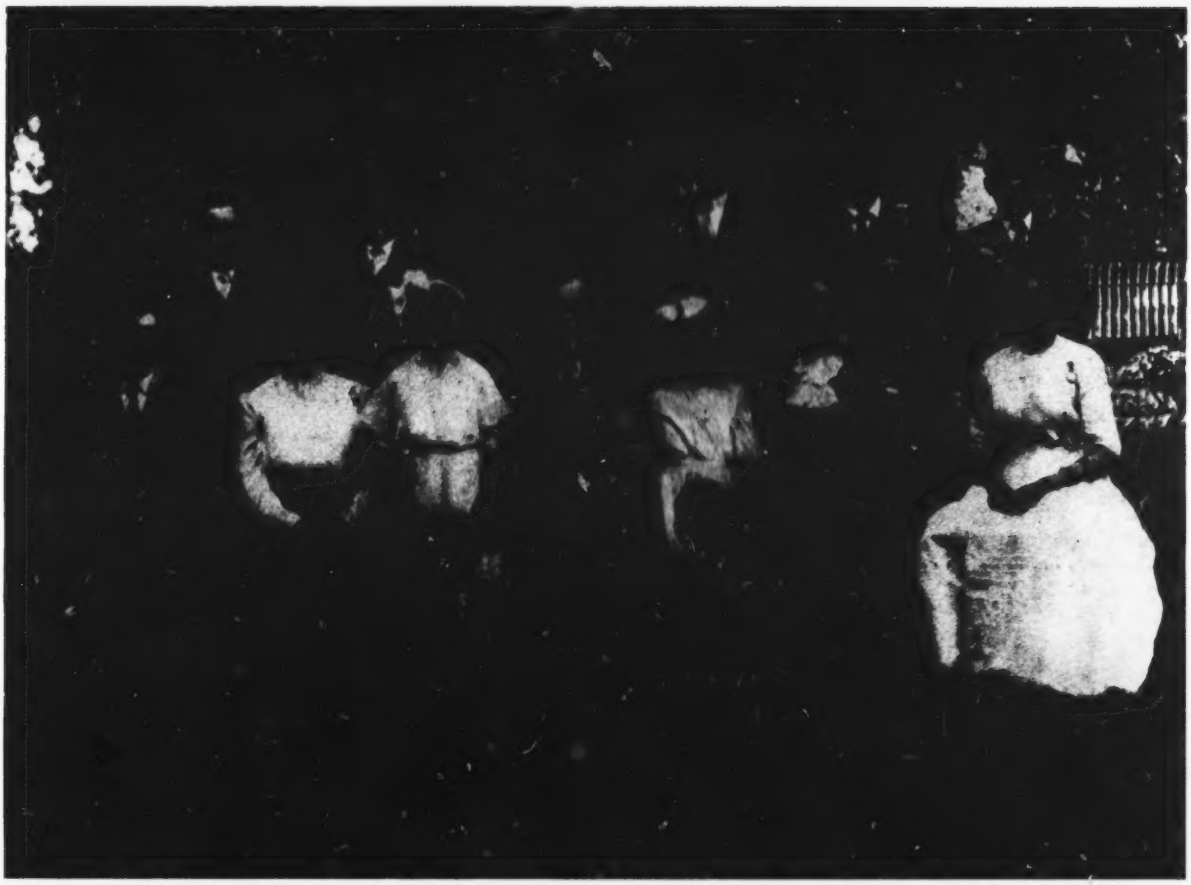
Additionally, the various German states were characterized by regional cultural differences which were visible in such things as house types, clothing, dance forms, art forms, and social customs. The typical house of the Bavarian peasant, for example, was the chalet, with a white surface often elaborately painted with pictures of religious and cultural events. The typical clothing for the women consisted of a dirndle worn over a white cotton half-blouse and covered by an apron, a small hat, white stockings, and black shoes with buckles. Men wore the *lederhosen*, gray jackets with green lapels and trim, hats trimmed with goats' beards, and knee-socks. Dance forms were polkas, schottisches, *Schuhplattler*, and songs typically included yodels and zither music. Among the social customs was the *Gemütlichkeit* typified by the *Bierstuben* or beer halls and the sociable drinking of beer.

The Westphalian or Lower German culture was significantly different from that of the Bavarians. Clothing types appear to be more similar to those of the Netherlands; wooden shoes were worn here through World War II, and photographs of men from the late nineteenth century show them wearing baggy trousers gathered at the ankle and loose, tunic-type shirts as work clothes. Houses were not chalets but the so-called *Fachwerk* or half-timbered houses, which in rural areas encompassed all the economic activities of the farm: they were the residences of the family and some of the hired help, they provided stabling for the cattle and horses, crops were stored on the rafters, grains were threshed on the central hall floor. In this part of Germany the youngest son inherited the farm, rather than the eldest son, and family ties were less important economically and socially than the neighborhood. Finally, beer-drinking was not as common or frequent as the drinking of wine or *Schnapps*.

Linguistic Variations. Not only were there regional variations in cultural forms in the German states, there were also linguistic differences, with numerous dialects which were not always mutually intelligible. It is through language that culture is perpetuated; language reflects the culture, the values, the world view, or the *Weltanschauung*; and the character of a people is expressed through its language, in literature, proverbs, in folklore and folksongs.

The dialects of Germany — Bavarian, Swabian, Thuringian, Low German (*Plattdeutsch*, which is most closely related to English), and Yiddish, for instance — are all related in that they developed out of the original Old High German; but each has developed independently, due to cultural and physical barriers and isolation over a number of years. Speakers of various dialects can communicate through *Hochdeutsch* or High German, which is taught in all the schools; but

Wilhemina Hilgedick Knapheide



Hennig O. Krabbenhoft and Family. Herr Krabbenhoft was born in Schleswig-Holstein in 1856 and in 1874 emigrated with his parents who homesteaded in Elmwood Township, Clay County.

regional variations and accents indicate where the speaker is from, just as are regional accents and dialects in the United States (Midwest compared with the South, for example).

Thus, the German immigrants to Minnesota did not have a common shared language: they spoke Swiss German, Austrian German (which also has several dialects), Bavarian German, Low German, and so on. As in Germany itself, these regional dialects were used in the homes; but in social settings with other Germans, as in the German churches and schools, *Hochdeutsch* was used.

Religious Variations. In most books and articles on German-Americans, only two religions are mentioned, so that one is given the impression that all Germans were either Catholic or Lutheran. This is actually not the case, for in both Germany and the United States there were German congregations of other Protestant denominations. In Minnesota there were definitely Lutheran German communities and Catholic German communities (St. Cloud and New Market, for instance); but in St. Paul there were several German-Baptist churches (First Baptist Church in Lower Town and the Oakdale Chapel on the West Side, for instance), German-Methodist churches (First German Methodiste Episte Church, now Fairmount Avenue Methodist Church, a German M.E. Church on Dayton's Bluff and Old Salem Evangelical Church in Inver Grove), and a Presbyterian-German church. There were Moravian churches in Waconia and Chaska, and the Mennonites at Mountain Lake. The Free Thinkers or Turners (members of the *Turnverein* or gymnastic society) were considered a "church" by Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist German-Americans because they held classes or meetings on Sundays and because they converted members of these churches to their way of thinking. The Turners, however, were agnostics in the minds of the "other" religions, and Turner activities were forbidden to them. Another religion which has served as a very effective boundary-maintaining mechanism is that of the Jewish faith. German Jews share even less in terms of a common historical and cultural experience than German-Americans.

German Settlements in Minnesota. The areas where German immigrants settled in Minnesota are also varied. Factors influencing choice of settlement site include the time of immigration and availability of land, particularly inexpensive land, the existence of "German" communities (based on common regional origins, like Westphalians or Bavarians, or on religion). There was a tendency for German immigrants to settle along the major water courses in Minnesota, and German settlements are found on the St. Croix River (Stillwater), the Minnesota River (New Ulm in Brown County, Shakopee and Chaska in

Carver County, also Waconia, St. Bonifacius, Young America, and Cologne), and along the Mississippi River: St. Paul's West Side and Dayton's Bluff, Hastings, Inver Grove, at the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers in St. Paul (specifically Reserve Township, which was about equal in German and Irish settlement), and St. Cloud.

Certainly immigrants in these areas and settlements had experiences different from those in other German-American areas. Reserve Township in St. Paul was a frontier community settled by German and Irish immigrants and pioneers. They did not live through an Indian uprising, as did the German-Americans at New Ulm, another frontier community. The history of each local German community, then, was different. There were also differences due to rural living compared to city living, and due to the number of German-Americans in a community — or the density of the German-American population. German traits, language, endogamy (marriage within the community), and cultural perpetuation persisted far longer in rural areas than in urban areas: urban immigrants assimilate more rapidly than rural immigrants.

Jenny Tauer of New Ulm, Minn., quilting at the New Ulm Heritagefest, 1979.

Nineteenth Century German-Americans

The published accounts of German-American immigration contain a number of generalizations about the immigrants and the immigrant experience. The generalization says that the Germans were laborers, farmers, and tradesmen emigrating with their families, who followed the American frontier and "Yankee" (or New England) pioneers. They preferred to settle in land that was already opened or partially settled, in territories that had become (or were about to become) states, and near markets in partially developed land. Their values and attitudes differed from those of their Anglo-American neighbors. The Germans came seeking security, not wealth; they were reluctant to try innovations; and they resisted assimilation because of value conflicts. Social cohesion was reinforced by social and cultural activities.[4]

Just as there was no shared historical experience and cultural tradition for German immigrants to Minnesota, German-Americans in Minnesota do not fit neatly into such generalizations. Each immigrant was an individual with individual experiences, values, and reasons for emigrating. In some ways they were alike and shared experiences; in others, they were unique.

Rural or Peasant Background. Many nineteenth century German immigrants came from rural or peasant backgrounds, immigrating because of economic and socio-political conditions in their homelands. Economic conditions suffered as a result of the Napoleonic wars, cottage industries were threatened by increasing industrialization and utilization of machinery for manufacturing, taxation was high, and there was insufficient land for an increasing population. Mandatory military service and conscription was common, and in many cases involved discriminatory and brutal practices. Landless peasant German immigrants often came as family units: unmarried adult men and parents, nuclear family units of parents and children, and extended family units of several generations — grandparents and aunts and uncles. Unlike immigrants of peasant background from other European nations, German immigrants were educated, for the various German states stressed education for everyone, although the amount of education varied according to socio-economic status. Such individuals, then, came seeking improved economic opportunities and living conditions.

Not all nineteenth-century immigrants were from rural backgrounds, however. Between 1846 and 1856 several thousand immigrants known as the "Forty-Eighters" emigrated to the United States as political refugees from a failed rebellion in Germany. Efforts of intellectuals to establish a unified Germany with political freedom had failed, causing increased authoritarian constitutions and military strength. Many of the participants in the ill-fated rebellion fled from Germany into Switzerland, France, Holland, and England, and from there emigrated to the United States, willing to sacrifice their German background for political freedom.[5] Generally, these were younger men who emigrated alone, without family or baggage, coming from such professional backgrounds as teaching, medicine, law, art, music, and journalism. They were well-informed about American politics and social conditions and had little interest in the frontier life of America. They were often multi-lingual, although their English was not always strong. What distinguished these immigrants from other German immigrants was not the date of their arrival but their political attitude, and this led to an active participation in the politics of the United States.[6]

Pioneers on the Frontier. Another generalization that had been made about German immigrants is that they were not pioneers who settled the frontiers but late-comers who followed "Yankee" (New England) frontiersmen to take over land that had been partially developed, improving what others had begun, often in territories that were about to become or had just become states.[7] They also preferred to settle near established markets, along or near navigable rivers or by lakes, in well-watered, forested, and hilly or rolling land with good limestone soils or rich soils.[8] Land was not regarded as an economic investment for improvement and exploitation but was bought for permanent settlement and permanent homes. Because of their past experiences with small landholdings in Europe, German immigrants relied on intensive cultivation and diversified farming, used fertilizers and other methods of soil conservation, preferred group settlements of agricultural villages like those in the homeland, and were not innovative and progressive in agricultural endeavors.[9]

Certainly not all German immigrants in Minnesota conformed to these generalizations. There were Germans in Minnesota before it became a territory in 1849, and many more came prior to statehood in 1858. There were no established markets to settle in or near and there were no partially developed lands: Minnesota in the 1850s was still a wilderness and a frontier, and the Germans who settled there — in St. Paul, St. Cloud, New Ulm, and other communities — were pioneer farmers, clearing and developing the land and living in log cabins until land titles were cleared and permanent homes could be built. Especially during the 1850s, many German settlers in Minnesota did not come directly from Germany but from German communities in places like Missouri, Wisconsin, and Ohio — because of the availability of land, particularly federal lands that were available at $1.25 per acre. Minnesota was not necessarily the first place they settled, although it usually became their permanent location. Although some of the German settlements may have followed the European agricultural village patterns, the majority of the German pioneers lived on scattered homesteads or farmsteads, following the American pattern.

Germans also were innovative and experimental farmers, trying to adapt various crops to survive the harsh Minnesota winters. By 1853 one Westphalian immigrant, Rudolph Knapheide, was experimenting with grapes on his homestead in Reserve Township of Ramsey County, and by 1875 he was recognized as a pioneer grape-grower in Minnesota, experimenting with 40 varieties of grapes to find those best adapted to the climate and for wine-making. By the 1890s Knapheide also was experimenting with test varieties of grains that were being introduced by seed companies. Other Germans were experimenting with different crops and made even more significant contributions to agriculture in the Midwest.

German "clannishness." According to some writers, "German clannishness" prevented rapid assimilation, and intermarriage was rare.[10] Family structure and church were important to the German immigrants. These two factors influenced German settlement; they tended to settle in areas where there were already Germans, preferably relatives or persons from the same region of Germany. The second criterion was religious affiliation (or the lack of it): they also tended to settle in communities of the same religious denomination, if possible — Catholic, Lutheran or Methodist, or among other Turners.

The family unit, which varied in size and composition, was an important institution in the maintenance of social traditions and the language. A number of German social institutions were transplanted to America, and Germans tended to stay together for social and sociable occasions. The notion of the family sometimes included other Germans, especially those from the same province or region of Germany and of the same religion. When in need of assistance, it would be to this circle that the immigrants would turn. This is borne out in correspondence that was directed to the Westphalian immigrant, Rudolph Knapheide, mentioned above. Letters addressed to Knapheide from real and fictive kin ask for financial assistance. A fellow German-American who had been crippled in a train robbery and who wanted to buy a device for peddling his wares — the only occupation left to him after his injury — asked for $20. A man in Burlington, Iowa, asked for money to buy a horse so that he would be able to get to and from work, and a nephew asked for money for house repairs. However, in this case there was reciprocity obviously involved: the nephew, a carpenter, kept Knapheide supplied with honey boxes and built the new porch on his home. A widowed sister-in-law and her second husband also wrote frequently asking for assistance. On one occasion the sister-in-law wrote to Knapheide asking for his assistance in locating her wandering spouse. When the errant spouse returned, he, too, wrote to Knapheide — asking for potatoes for planting because his had frozen; later he asked for Knapheide to take his two stepsons so that there would be two mouths less to feed (and the two sons in question were practically raised by the Knapheides), and then sought help in finding a job because there were "too many Swedes in Litchfield" who were taking all the jobs. Finally, this pair wrote to the Knapheides asking them to serve as their representatives in the courtship of their daughter, who was at the time (1891) residing with the Knapheides.

The courtship generated some amusing correspondence. The daughter, Marie, had been living with the Knapheides for about three years, working for them as a maid. One of their hired hands decided he wanted to marry Marie, a desire she did not share. Evidently he tried to force her to marry him and eventually won her agreement to write to her parents for their consent. This correspondence is still in the possession of the Knapheide descendants:

> Dear Mr. and Mrs. W.,
>
> I am taking the liberty of writing you a few lines and have a request for you. I have known your daughter, Marie, for some time, and we have been in love for some time, but not

openly; now, however, it has come into the open, and our hearts have found each other and know that we are united. We have worked together for 3 years and certainly do know each other and know that we are responsible and steady. If we weren't, we would not have been here for such a long time, and Knapheides know it too. When they found out . . . because he wants to give me his farm and vineyard so that I will have a good start. Dear Mr. and Mrs. W., I am asking you to be so kind and give your consent to our marriage. I was going to come up myself, but we thought about it with Marie and the old folks, and this is better because it costs quite a bit of money to travel myself, and I think this will be all right with you. If not, I still can come, with Marie.

Therefore, please grant my request. I will be a faithful son-in-law until I die. I will do what is in my power to make your daughter happy. I have saved some money, and we will have a good start. I entirely forgot to introduce myself, but you know me. My name is Otto T---. I have worked for the Knapheides for 3 years. Dear Folks, I will also be happy to help you out when you are in financial difficulties, and Marie promised to marry me if you give your consent. I hope you will give it because I love her very much, and she loves me too . . . Greetings from your friend.

In my next letter I will say son-in-law.

Otto

P.S. If you want, you can write a few lines in English to Marie. For you know she cannot read German. I can read it to her, but everybody prefers to read a letter oneself.

Marie, however, did not want to marry Otto and sent her parents a desperate letter (in English) asking them to tell the young man no:

Dear Mother and Father,

Your letter has found me quite unhappy last Saturday and I must tell you why it did find me so. Because Otto has almost tormented the life out of me that I should marry him. I did not want to marry him, but still he did not let me alone at all until I promised to let him write you about it and then he said if you did not wanted it he would let me alone. So I told him that he could ask you about it.

So I thought I play a dirty trick on him. So I have to promise him that I would not write against it. But I do this without anybody now (sic) it. To get out of it without any more fuss.

Now, dear mother and father, wount (sic) you please me so much and not give your will to him that he couldn't have me. For you know how I hate Otto all ways. And I pray to god that you will not let on in the letter that you write to him that I wrote a letter to (sic). I hope that I can trust you, Dear Ma and Pa, that you will tell him that could not have me and not let on at all that you now (sic) that I am against it. Will close for this teim (sic).

Your daughter, Mary

The parents did not write to Otto but wrote to the Knapheides, asking them to settle the matter.

Dear Brother-in Law and Sister-in-Law,

I have to write you a few lines because I received a letter from your laborer Otto and am enclosing the two letters, one from Otto and the other from Marie. Otto is asking our consent to his marriage with Marie. We, however, do not give him our consent, and Marie, too, wants nothing to do with him. Marie had already complained to us that he doesn't leave her in peace, and I would therefore like to ask you, in order to provide Marie some peace. You can see the situation from the letters I am enclosing.

Marie did not marry Otto, nor did Otto inherit the Knapheide farm and vineyards: they went to his daughters and grandchildren.

Among the ethnic traditions within the family that were maintained were dietary traditions. Food is certainly an important ethnic characteristic, and certain kinds of foods were typical in German families, such as sauerkraut, German coffeecakes, and home-made sausage. An interview with one descendant of German immigrants described how sausages were made at home, using a meat press.

First they gotta grind the meat, and then they mix it like this (using hands to show a squeezing motion), season it, and what have you, and then put it into the meat press. The casing, made of the intestine, was put over the end of the spigot. I can still see Mother taking the intestine. Then she'd turn the handle — she was left-handed, so she's turn it with that, and then she's have this hand (the right), and she's hold the casing shut, and turn it, and the meat would be pressed out into the skin. When it got as big as she wanted, why, she'd just back the pressure up, catch it, twist it, and that was that. We kids used to do it. We used to tie 'em, we used to crank it. She'd make breakfast sausages, head cheese, and all that kind of thing. They used the whole darn pig. She even pickled the pig's feet. And she'd render her own lard with the same thing, with the meat press. (A. H. Interview)

In another interview, keeping meat fresh during the winter was described. A calf would be butchered in the late fall, about the time of the first snow, and it was

Yard of Ferdinand Hinrichs residence, 652 E. 5th Street, St. Paul, ca. 1904.

kept cold and frozen all winter by packing it in barrels of snow.

One of my fondest memories of holiday meals is the German coffeecake baked first by my great-great-aunt and later by my grandmother, a deliciously rich yeast coffee cake in two layers, with butter, cinnamon, and brown sugar filling between the layers and a topping of sugar, butter, and cinnamon. Grandchildren would squabble over the last piece of cake.

In many German communities social life centered around the family or the church, or both. Some church occasions were special holiday events — such as Christmas parties and Fourth of July picnics — but there were also special church events, such as the Lutheran church's *Missionfest*. The Lutheran church at Webster, Minnesota, held the *Missionfest* on a Sunday in the spring of the year at a specially prepared site near a woods. There was a big bandstand decorated with leaves, seats were made of old planks obtained from the local lumber yard, and large, long tables were set up for food. Old stoves were brought to the site for preparation of the food. The *Missionfest* was an all-day affair participated in by families from the surrounding farms and the town, and also from the neighboring Bohemian community. They would arrive in wagons drawn by horses, and the horses would be tied up someplace where there was feed. Before the program began, the children would run and play in the woods and around a small creek, and some of them would swim. Some of the older children would run around in the woods looking for the big paper wasps' nests, and if they found any they would throw sticks and stones through them. When the bugle blew, everyone went to the bandstand area for the sermon. After the sermon there was food — including homemade *Knockwurst*, ham, and potato salad, as well as Bohemian food. After the meal some of the farmers would go home to milk their cows and would then return for the hymn-singing. Singing was accompanied by an organ brought specifically for the purpose and a brass band from the Lutheran church in Lanesboro. Celebrations such as these provided opportunities for people to get together for recreation and socialization, at the same time raising money for the missions and providing for continuity of the German language and traditions.

The German Language. Until about World War I, the German language was retained and used in the homes, German churches, and the German schools. The German churches held services in the German language; later, English services were added; and about the time of the First World War, the German services were dropped. Emanuel Lutheran Church, on St. Paul's West Side, still holds a German language service the second Sunday of every month at 9:30 a.m.

In many areas, German schools were affiliated with the German churches, particularly the Catholic and Lutheran churches. The German schools combined German and English lessons in the curriculum,

with German coursework in the mornings and English in the afternoons. At the Lutheran German School at Webster, Minnesota, for example, morning classes were in the German language and catechism; and English lessons and American history were held in the afternoons. The school was a one-room building, and about the size of a double garage. There was no indoor plumbing; a double biffy and a woodshed were located in back of the school, as was the water pump. There was a water pail in the school for drinking water, and all the students used a communal dipper. The school was heated by a wood-burning stove in the center of the room, surrounded by a sheet-metal protector. The four grades were taught by the minister. He was very strict, and the school was compared to the Prussian army: "He told you to do something, and you did it, or else you got knocked under the table." Lessons were done on slates, and assignments had to be done right, or the children would be whipped or kept after school until they had the lessons letter-perfect, by heart. This was sometimes difficult for farm-children, who had chores to do when they got home from school and then had to study at night by kerosene lamps.

Sometimes the German schools also were expected to take on discipline problems from the public schools. At a German school in Minneapolis, for example, the teacher was reputed to be strict but fair with such students:

> We had one kid there that was awful unruly, and they chased him out of the school and told his parents that the public school couldn't control him. He said, 'I'm going to turn Catholic, I'm going up to the Catholic school.' So he want up there. About four days later, he came back, and the teacher said, 'What do you want back here? I thought you turned Catholic.' 'No,' he said, 'you've got to lay on your knees too much.' He was told to behave himself, but the kid had a candle end, and it was cold in there in the winter, and the kid would light the candle and put it under the ink well. When it got hot, it went BOOM! and there was a bunch of ink on the ceiling, and boy! did he get out of there, he ran out of there and never came back. (M.S. interview)

German language newspapers also played an important role in maintaining the German language, the German community, and in delaying assimilation. They served as the voice and mirror of the immigrant community, helping to initiate newcomers into the new way of living in terms that they could understand and to ease the transition from the homeland to the new country.[11] The materials presented were selective, often coming from the English-language newspapers which came out earlier in the day. The publications were political or reform publications, clerical or humanistic, societal journals, daily newspapers and tabloids, and literary publications. Among the newspapers in Minnesota were the *Volkszeitung*, which was first published in St. Paul in 1877, evolving out of two earlier papers dating back to 1856, the *Staats Zeitung* and the *Volksblatt*. In 1881 its circulation was over 10,000. There was also the *Minnesota Demokrat*, a weekly German newspaper established in 1878; the *New Ulm Pioneer* (New Ulm, Minnesota); a political paper, *Der Wanderer*, published in St. Paul by the Catholic Church; *Apotheker Zeitung*, the publication of Minnesota druggists; the *Freie Presse Herold* in Minneapolis; and *Nordstern*, a German publication of eighteen years in Stearns County and St. Cloud.[13]

Participation in Social and Sociable Institutions. One of the characteristics of German-Americans, and one which supposedly delayed assimilation, was participation in a variety of German organizations, such as the *Gesangvereine* (Singing Societies), the *Turnverein* (gymnastic society), Sons of Hermann, Masons, and drama clubs. However, these were not always found in the smaller communities and more rural areas, but were more typical of urban centers. Participating in such organizations also depended upon church membership; church membership and active participation in the Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, and Methodist church communities and their activities prohibited membership in fraternal organizations. These churches were also violently opposed to Turners, whom they regarded as agnostics with a particularly harmful influence on the young people of their communities.

Participation in Politics. Until the Forty-Eighters arrived in the United States, the major political concern of the German-Americans was their position as immigrants in the new country, and they were particularly sensitive to moves which would deny them their rights, such as the nativist political movement of the 1850s.[14] German-Americans, with the exception of the Forty-Eighters, supposedly were not active in political and civic issues of their communities and did not run for or hold political office, although they did vote.

Undoubtedly there were German-American immigrants who not only became American citizens shortly after their arrival in the United States, but who also held political offices. Rudolph Knapheide, for example, became an American citizen in 1854, eight years after leaving Prussia and three years after settling in Minnesota. He held several elected offices in Reserve Township of Ramsey County: he was overseer of the Reserve Township School District No. 2 and treasurer for the township schools in 1881. He served as town supervisor in Reserve Township from 1861 to 1864, and in 1878 he served on a specially appointed commission to choose the site of the new Fort Snelling bridge. He also worked with Thomas Cochran of the transit company and Archbishop Ireland in the 1890s for the development of Reserve Township, to bring in public transportation through the streetcar line, and to assist immigrants of German and other origins in settling the area. Germans served in politics in Minnesota at both the state and local levels.

Values. The values and attitudes of the German-Americans set them apart from their Anglo-American, "Puritan" neighbors.[15] They held education in high regard and opposed temperance legislation, especially that directed towards beer gardens and taverns. Unlike their "Puritan" neighbors, they did not see these as

roots of evil, nor did they agree with the strict observance of Sunday as the Sabbath in the Sunday "blue laws." The tradition of family life was important, as was the tradition of hospitality, pleasure, and *Gemütlichkeit*.

Hospitality included opening homes to any and all visitors and feeding them, and in the early territorial days this included the Indian neighbors. Not all of this may have been voluntary. There are accounts of Indians begging food from settlers and pioneers or raiding homes for food. In one case, several Indians came to a rural homestead and ate the feed which had been prepared for the hogs and chickens. After a day of listening to hungry hogs and chickens squawling their discontent, the next day the housewife fed her livestock earlier in the day. When her Indian visitors arrived at the same time for the "meal," the only thing visible was a large kettle of "soup" simmering on the stove, in reality, dishwater. The Indians consumed it rapidly, and several minutes later were observed in the yard vomiting. Apparently they were not impressed with the housewife's cooking, because they never returned for meals at the homestead.[16]

Friendships and social contacts with other German-Americans were important, also, and there was a great deal of visiting back and forth. The Knapheides, mentioned before, assisted German newcomers to St. Paul by providing them with jobs and a place to live until they were able to establish themselves. They usually remained friends long after the "servants" had left their employ. On one occasion, the Knapheides visited a former housemaid, who served them a chicken dinner. At the end of the meal they complimented their hostess on the fine meal, to which she replied, "Yes, poor old rooster, killed him this morning — been sick so long!"

The German Ethnic Experience in Minnesota

Despite the generalizations and stereotypes that have been described concerning German-Americans, there was no single German experience in Minnesota. There was actually a variety of experiences depending upon a number of factors and conditions which were different. These include:

(1) The area where the immigrants settled, whether the communities were urban or rural, and the degree to which they were German: that is, the ratio of German to non-German population.

(2) Religious differences. Germans were not just Catholics or Lutherans; they were also Baptists, Mennonites, Methodists, Moravians, Presbyterians, and Jews; and the religious ideology which they embraced colored their perceptions of the world and their relationships with other people around them.

(3) The area and cultural tradition of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, or Luxemburg from which they came.

(4) The time of immigration and arrival in Minnesota. Those coming as pioneers during the Territorial days of Minnesota experienced the hardships of clearing and settling the land, coping with Indian uprisings, the difficulties of communication with the outside and of obtaining goods and commodities from the outside when they were living in a wilderness area. Those who immigrated during the

The 9th Minnesota Sängerfest, 1877, Stillwater.

1850s, a period characterized by political conservatism and nativism, tended to assimilate less rapidly than immigrants before or after — because of the discrimination they encountered, which tended to unite them more as hyphenated "German-Americans."

(5) Dialectical differences which color the values, ethos, and *Weltanschauung* of a population, and which were overcome by learning *Hochdeutsch* or "High German."

(6) Personal, individual experiences.

The notion of a German-American identity is an artificial category or identity imposed upon German-speaking immigrants by outsiders and members of the dominant society. The immigrants themselves did not perceive themselves as Germans — but as Prussians, Westphalians, Bavarians, Austrians, or Swiss. Certain traits or attributes assigned to German-Americans by dominant society members became stereotypes of German-Americans: hardworking, red-faced, beer-drinking bucolic men dressed in *Lederhosen*; rosy-cheeked, plump, round-faced women wearing dirndles; spotless housekeepers, all dancing polkas, schottisches or *Schuhplattler* to the accompaniment of "oompah" bands (brass instruments, drums, and an accordian); singing and yodeling; and eating *Wurst*, *Sauerkraut*, and *Strudel*.

The real boundary-markers of the ethnic groups of Germans in Minnesota were the value systems, customs, and traditions which were different from those of other Minnesotans; the persistence of the German language in the home, the church, and the school; and behaviors which were cues to other Germans but which would not necessarily be perceived by outsiders. The values and traditions which set the Germans apart from the dominant society were perpetuated through the family, the language, and the religions. During World War I, when legislation prohibited speaking German in public and caused a very rapid assimilation, these traditions and values were, in essence, lost. In many German-American families, German heritage and ethnicity were not only played down — in many cases they were denied.

It has taken several generations for there to be a renaissance or reawakening of interest in the German heritage among the descendants of the early immigrants. For most of these descendants, values, traditions, and language have been lost, and those wishing to identify with a German-American ethnicity and heritage have had to seek a set of symbols which would set them apart as either German-Americans or Americans of German ancestry. The immigrants themselves, as a rule, do not consciously seek symbols of their ethnicity. Ethnicity is not something which they question or attempt to define; they live it. However, once that ethnicity has been lost, it is necessary to seek and select symbols of what are perceived as "German" ethnicity both for self-ascription and for recognition by others as members of the German ethnic group. The symbols which tend to be selected are things which have no emotional overtones or negative connotations and are usually based on what outsiders expect to see German-Americans doing or wearing.

In essence, the new symbols of German-American ethnicity are often drawn from stereotypes held by the outside society, perhaps archaic vestiges of a long-past culture or perhaps a culture which never really existed. For the most part, these modern symbols of German-American identity, which can be observed at ethnic celebrations like St. Paul's *Deutschertag*, are primarily Bavarian in origin: dances, like the *Schuhplattler*, polkas and schottisches, music performed by "oom-pah" bands or accordians, songs like "Du, Du liegst mir im Herzen" and "Die Lorelei," Bavarian clothing (dirndles for the women, *Lederhosen*, Bavarian jacket and hats decorated with the beard of the mountain goat for the men), foods like *Sauerkraut*, *Wurst*, *Strudel*, and *Bier*, and craft items for sale like woodcarvings, Christmas ornaments, and Advent calendars. Music by composers like Brahms, Schubert, Beethoven, and Wagner, literature by writers like Schiller, Hesse, and Mann, and art by artists like Dürer are rarely selected as being representative of German-American identity — perhaps because they have come to "belong" to all Western Europeans.

Thus, the German-American experience in Minnesota has differed according to time frame, personnel involved, areas of Germany and German-speaking countries from which they came, dialects of the German language spoken, and individual cultural traditions and histories. There has not been a single German experience in Minnesota but a variety of experiences, and the German-American identity is one which has been imposed upon persons from these backgrounds by outsiders as a simple way of simplifying the categorization of people.

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Notes

[1]Theodore Hueber, *The Germans in America* (Philadelphia: Chilton, 1962), pp. 2-32.

[2]Hueber, pp. 101-02.

[3]Kurt F. Reinhardt, *Germany, 2000 Years*, rev. ed. (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1961), p. 463.

[4]John A. Hawgood, *The Tragedy of German America* (New York: Arno Press, 1940), pp. 32-39.

[5]Huebner, p. 97.

[6]Huebner, pp. 98, 102-03.

[7]Hawgood, pp. 22-23.

[8]Hawgood, p. 27.

[9]Hawgood, p. 31.

[10]Hawgood, pp. 37-38.

[11]Carl Wittke, *The Germans in America: A Students Guide to Localized History* (New York: Columbia Teachers College Press, 1967), pp. 15-16.

[12]R. Klietsch and W. Nelson, "The Ethnic Newspaper: A Study of the Stages of Development of a Foreign Language Newspaper and the Process of Assimilation." A manuscript, dated 1963, in the Minnesota Historical Society, p. 5.

[13]Henry A. Castle, *History of St. Paul and Vicinity* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1912), 1:34; Klietsch and Nelson MS., pp. 5-7, 22; J. Fletcher Williams, *History of Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul and Outlines of the History of Minnesota* (Minneapolis: North Star Publishing Co., 1881), p. 360.

[14]Hawgood, p. 52.

[15]Hawgood, pp. 35-38.

[16]Thomas McLean Newson, *Pen Pictures of St. Paul, Minnesota, and Biographical Sketches of Old Settlers, from the Earliest Settlement of the City, up to and Including the Year 1857*, Vol. I (St. Paul: The Author, 1886), p. 211.

The Most Diversified Ethnic Group

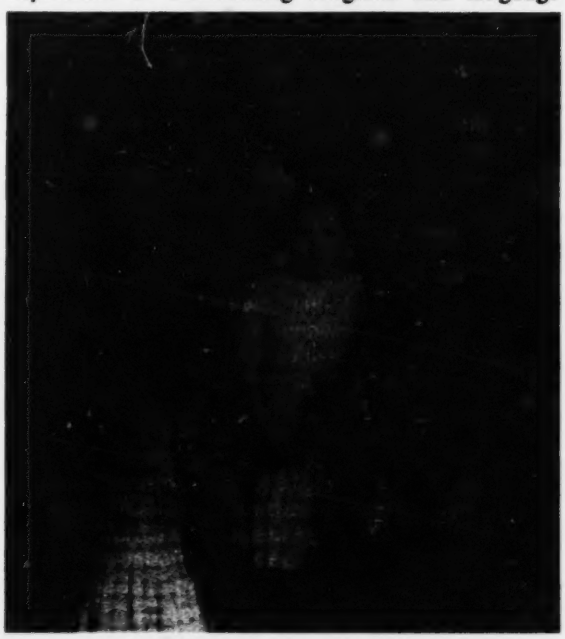
by Hildegard Binder Johnson

It is reassuring that an anthropologist and a historical geographer can agree there was or is no German experience in Minnesota more or less shared by all Germans — the pioneers, the immigrants of the 1880s and their descendants — who came to the "Scandinavian State of the Union." Only Minnesota and Wisconsin, the "German State of the Union," acquired ethnic by-names. Neither really is an ethnic term in the strict sense: one refers to a region in Europe, the other to the language, *Hochdeutsch*, which was not typical of daily communication in many German families who spoke dialects.

Dr. Bonney defines ethnicity as a value system, often perpetrated through language and family institutions which she illustrates by stories of and by individuals. But she also touches on the complexity of German immigration to the United States, to which a few comparative remarks may be added. No other non-English-speaking ethnic group in the United States lasted as long and was numerically as large as that from German-speaking countries. None spread itself as widely through pioneer settlements in the United States from the Eastern seaboard to Texas and Southern California. No other was as diversified regarding religion — Catholics, Protestants of various confessions, sects, freethinkers. No other group represents as many difficulties for its numerical assessment, since many German-speaking immigrants came from countries outside of Germany proper and Germany changed boundaries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. No other has to face the fact of two fatherlands in the second half of the twentieth century.

German official emigration statistics still distinguished among twenty-five political divisions and thirteen provinces in Prussia after 1871. Such distinction was not reached by American immigration census records. Contrary to Dr. Bonney's statement that the statistical data for German immigrants during the early days of Minnesota's history do not show "Germany" as a place-of-birth, the census of 1860 for Minnesota lists 13,482 German-born: among these, 7,505 have "Germany" and 5,977 "Prussia" as the country of birth. This is 76.85 percent of the total. Both area units are far too large to reveal the true "ethnicity" of the German immigration, and one wonders if, for instance, the notation "Rhine" in the manuscript census would be listed as Prussia or Germany in the published census.

The collective term "German-Americans" did not come into general use until the latter part of the nineteenth century, when, largely due to the enormous literary activity of many educated Germans, among which the "Forty-eighters" had a leading role, the German press in America amounted to at least forty percent of all ethnic newspapers and journals. German-Americanism was also supported by the phenomenal economic and political rise of the German Reich after 1871, when German-speaking people became conscious and proud of a national heritage. Not all shared the newly found pride: groups like the Mennonites, which represented the "Russländer" in Minnesota, stood aside. Still, as a group which had the experience of maintaining religious and language



Solomon Martin Family, Volga Germans, settled in Sibley County.

traditions in a foreign country before they came to America, they were to maintain their ethnic traditions more tenaciously than most others in America also.

As Dr. Bonney points out, most of the German-Americans spoke a dialect at home. Old timers still told, in the 1940s, that many ministers also spoke dialects, and when they preached in English the various regional origins were strongly reflected in their pronunciation. The dialect is even reflected in the manuscript census records. Two examples may illustrate this: a group of Germans in two wards in St. Anthony came from "Prison, Germany." This is explained by the census taker in 1860 writing down what he heard. Saxonians — there was a kingdom of Saxony and a province of Saxony in Prussia — pronounce the dipthong "eu" in *Preussen* like "i" in "price" or "strike." *Preussen* thus was heard as

"Prison." Somebody else said "Deering." This person must have come from Thuringia, *Thüringen* in German. People from Thuringia often soften "t" to "d" and again modify the dipthong. This should suffice to justify the suggestion that valid ethnic investigation of German groups in early Minnesota — as elsewhere — can benefit from using manuscript census materials.

It is refreshing that Dr. Bonney cites specific examples of experiences in a German Methodist family. German Methodism is often forgotten among the confessions encountered among German immigrants. In 1885, when German Methodism celebrated its Golden Jubilee in the United States, Minnesota had 67 German Methodist churches, with 37 parsonages and 42,000 members. Among Germans, the Methodist-sponsored cause of temperance had a special meaning, compared to Germans in general; this assured struggling German Methodist churches warm support from their American English-speaking brethren.

Differences between Bavarian and Westphalian (Dr. Bonney's examples) cultures as expressed in attire and houseforms in Europe were rarely reflected in the American environment. German immigrants during the second half of the nineteenth century rarely boarded ship in native costumes or took them along in their luggage. Nor was duplication of house styles from different German regions practical. A historical geographer is more impressed by the influence of new environmental forces: the Sears Roebuck catalogue, the railroads which soon transported standardized building materials to settlers living in log cabins (or even sod houses), of builders' guidebooks, and of the United States rectangular land survey — which induced the single farmstead type of rural settlement and the platting of main street villages and grid-towns for American and foreign-born settlers alike.

German settlement in Minnesota was, indeed, somewhat oriented along water courses. But the development of an enduring German core region in Minnesota, centered in the Minnesota Valley, is due to the availability of surveyed land from the government land office in this region at the time of the pioneer landseekers' arrival. That later arrivals eagerly sought (among their countrymen) for land left over, or available from non-Germans who were moving out, is a phenomenon which does not seem to be characteristic of Germans in particular. During the frontier period, towns developed preponderantly along rivers because water transportation was still very important. The one example of a town founded by Germans in Minnesota, New Ulm, is a river town; yet most towns were river towns in the 1850s. New Ulm also is an example — duplicated elswhere — of the fact that Germans did settle directly on the frontier close to or even among Indians. Earlier generalizations that the Germans were not in the frontline but preferred to buy partially developed farms are erroneous.

Indeed, each immigrant had his individual reasons and experiences during the emigration-immigration process. How far experiences which were more or less shared by all Germans were specifically German and how far Norwegian, Swedish, and Polish immigrants shared them also needs further comparative investigation. Nostalgia for the homeplace in Europe, loyalty to a church which represented the focus of social life, generation conflicts, to name some ethnic experiences, may be not all that specific to any ethnic group but characteristic of most northwestern and central Europeans during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Dr. Bonney rightly emphasizes that many Germans did not come directly to Minnesota but often had several years of experiences in America before they arrived in St. Paul to go to the towns in the Minnesota Valley, Stearns County, or elsewhere. Minnesota's location made Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and particularly Wisconsin, way-stations for Germans who finally came to what was called "the Great Northwest." The earlier sojourns provided them with eastern connections all over the northeastern industrial core region of the United States. It is interesting to learn of Rudolph Knapheide's experimentation with grapes in Dr. Bonney's paper. Let us add the name of Wendelin Grimm, whose successful acclimatization of alfalfa in Carver County was a singular contribution to agriculture in the Midwest.

The German language in schools and churches did suffer during World War I after Archbishop Ireland's "Americanization plan" had already accelerated the introduction of English among German Catholics. But the Germans of St. Paul rallied in never-before reached unison to build the *Deutsche Haus* immediately after World War I; many churches maintained a bilingual pattern for Sunday services until the 1930s; and a "rapid assimilation" through World War I did not mean that there were not many instances of a strengthened ethnic awareness among Germans who had experienced the hearings of the Public Safety Commission.

One must fully agree with the statement that ethnic "symbols . . . are usually based on what outsiders expect German-Americans to be doing or wearing." These symbols are often "archaic vestiges," of which there is a little collection in the house of the German Volksfest Association on Summit Avenue in St. Paul. The adherence to and modification of such symbols has fortuitously been called "colonial petrification" by Ernest Feise in 1940. Commercialism, which has given ethnicity a boost in recent years, has added to this petrification. It has strengthened the idea among the general public that short leather pants, a Tyrolian hat with a small feather, a dirndle dress, *Schuhplattler*, and beer served in steins — a semi-Bavarian image — are typically German. Actually, these are "stereotypes held by the outside society," to quote Dr. Bonney.

Hildegard Binder Johnson, historical geographer, Ph.D., University of Berlin, Professor of Geography Emerita, taught at Macalester College, 1947-1975, and was guest professor at the universities of Georgia, California (Berkeley), Washington, and Minnesota. Her research focused on German immigration from 1688 to around 1900. Since the 1950s she has worked on historical cartography, the U.S. survey and landscape perception. Recent publications: *Order Upon the Land* (OUP, 1976); "Perceptions and Illustrations of the American Landscape," *This Land of Ours* (Indiana Historical Society, 1978); "The Framed Landscape," (*Landscape*, spring 1979). Author of chapter on Germans in Minnesota Ethnic Project.

Unraveling the Mystery of Ethnic Identity

by Don Ward

First, permit me to congratulate Professor Bonney for a marvelous presentation on the German ethnic experience in Minnesota. She has given us both the macro-view of the trained social scientist and the micro-view of one who knows intimate details of German-American life in this state. I am thus afraid that my reaction to Professor Bonney's paper will have to be — to a certain degree — a reiteration and confirmation of many of the points that she has already explicated. The only new points I will be able to bring up are some questions that have not yet been raised, and I can also point to some areas in which intensive investigation and assembling of data will have to be achieved before one can truly understand the ethnic experience of German-Americans in this state.

I found it especially revealing that Professor Bonney first provided us with a working description of the concept "ethnic group" and then proceeded to demonstrate convincingly that the German-Americans of Minnesota do not fit the definition. She was quite correct in pointing out that — at the time of the main thrust of the immigration — there was no single German ethnic identity. She illustrated this point by showing the manifold political divisions into which Germany was divided at the various periods of emigration. I would have placed even greater emphasis on this point, for the problem of the ethnic diversity of German-speaking peoples goes far deeper and much farther back in history than Prof. Bonney has revealed.

The ethnic division of Germans is more than a question of the nineteenth century political divisions that she has mentioned. The division of German speakers into Bavarians, Franconians, Thuringians, Saxons, Swabians, Alemannians, etc., rests upon separate nations of Germanic peoples who migrated into present-day German lands millennia ago, where they have developed into separate nations and where they still speak separate languages — not just dialects of a single tongue. Martin Luther's attempt to produce a standardized German language — remarkable as it was — remained a somewhat artificial linguistic maneuver. Still today children in Germany speak the language of their regional heritage naturally and have to learn standardized German as a foreign language in schools. Thus Prof. Bonney's statement that modern German dialects go back to the Old High German language (ca. 6th - 10th centuries) is not correct. The linguistic differences on which the modern German dialects are based were already well established in the Old High German period. There was no single Old High German language from which the present-day dialect emerged — as Prof. Bonney would have us believe. Still, her main point that there were vast regional differences in culture and language remains valid.

One basic question that I miss in Prof. Bonney's paper is: why study the German ethnic experience in Minnesota at all? This question, of course, involves the reason for holding this very conference, a reason that is perhaps implicit in the words of the title: "A Major Heritage." These words imply the task of identifying what this heritage is. Does the task then consist of identifying the ethnic characteristics of German-Americans and in enumerating the cultural contributions that these immigrants have made to America? A number of such contributions are widely known: the institution we still call "kindergarten," the Christmas tree, the models for advanced universities, franks and sauerkraut, gymnastic clubs, glee clubs, breweries — all these and more come immediately to mind. German-Americans like to call attention to these contributions that their culture has made to the American scene. And when they do so, they make evident the need for all ethnic groups in America to become better acquainted with their own ethnic identities as well as the need to call attention to their contributions from the past, so that they will be better prepared to cherish and nurture their own cultural heritage in the future.

But the enumeration of German-American contributions to America such as franks, sauerkraut, universities, and breweries is not enough. We need to penetrate deeper into the more intangible elements and factors that constitute national identities. This kind of probing — as Prof. Bonney has shown convincingly — has been made very difficult because of the great diversity among the German-Americans in the North Star State.

German Emigration to Other Countries

People who have investigated other groups of Germans who have settled in foreign lands have had much easier tasks. For example, Ingeborg Weber-Kellermann and Annemie Schenk have studied a community of Saxons who emigrated to Transylvania; they have made many valid observations and have drawn valuable inferences about the processes of inter-ethnicity. However, the group they were studying had emigrated as a single community from Saxony in 1180, and they live in an area where the surrounding populace represents a culture quite distinct from their own, the area being in present-day Rumania. In such a case, the ethnic identity of the community members

can be determined and contrasted to the cultural and social milieu of the non-German surrounding territory.

Similarly, such recent studies as the one by Rolf Wilhelm Brednich of a Mennonite group in Canada are at least feasible because of the relatively homogeneous structure of the communities under study.[2] This particular Mennonite group had been intact as a community since the days of the Reformation, when, as a group of Anabaptists, they fled persecution: from Baden, Germany, into Holland, and then into the region of the Vistula delta, where they remained as farmers for several centuries. Here they gradually acquired the Low German language of the surrounding territory. In the eighteenth century, Catherine the Great permitted them to establish a colony in Russia. After the 1919 revolution which overthrew the Czarist regime, the group was no longer welcome in Russia, and they emigrated once again, this time to Canada. Unlike the U.S., the Canadian government had a policy of encouraging group settlements for immigrants. Thus the community that Prof. Brednich chose to study remains one that can be identified culturally and ethnically to this very day.

Martin Family and Henry Hoppe working in beet field in Sibley County.

Similar auspicious circumstances have been encountered by Karl Ilg, who has made intensive studies of German communities in Brazil.[3] But the situation in Minnesota is, as Prof. Bonney has pointed out, so complex by contrast that it almost defies analysis. Here the processes of adaptation, acculturation, and assimilation have proceeded so far that any hope of identifying the ethnic identity of German-Americans may well be a vain illusion.

Here, as elsewhere in the U.S., the process known as "Hansen's Law" has been operative. Hansen, in observing the behavior of immigrant groups in America, has shown that the first generation fails to acculturate at all; the second generation achieves acculturation but, in the process, turns its back on its own cultural heritage. Then the members of the third and fourth generations attempt to rediscover their own lost heritage. Prof. Bonney has pointed out what happens in such cases. The stereotyped images held by outsiders of a group's ethnic identity are then adopted by the group itself as the symbols of ethnicity. Since these stereotypes generally have only the most tenuous connection with reality, the results of the process become grotesque. This process can be observed all over the United States. For example, I know of communities in Missouri that — even though they remain predominantly German in regard to the origin of their inhabitants — have nevertheless become totally assimilated into the Anglo-Irish mainsteam that is the Midwest. The current attempts of the third and fourth generation inhabitants of these communities to recover their German heritage have resulted in practices that are grotesque parodies of German beer-garden behavior.

Similarly, the German immigrant community in Los Angeles has created a "village" consisting of festival halls, restaurants, shops, taverns, and beer gardens. The group stages periodic festivals celebrating such German holidays as *Fasnacht*, the month of October, and the wine harvest. Somehow the organizers have thought that the German festivals and costumes have to look as if they came directly from South Tyrol to be German. The participants — having forgotten much of their German heritage — learn their songs, dances, and costumes from books. It is clearly the American idea of what German identity is supposed to be that has come to dominate these festivities. The results are predictably grotesque. Indeed, the entire setting — with its cutesy gingerbread houses, hand-painted folk-motifs, etc. — looks as if it was constructed on a Hollywood set by a mad carpenter whose mother had been frightened by Tyrolean yodelers.

German-Americans are not the only ethnic group plagued by these distortions. Virtually every American ethnic group has shared in this experience. For example, Linda Dégh — a native Hungarian — investigated a Hungarian-American community in Louisiana. She discovered similar phenomena that parallel those I have discussed in their grotesqueness.[4]

Professional folklorists have a term for this kind of behavior, viz., the process of adopting traditional symbols of ethnic identity such as folk art, costumes, songs, and dances from printed sources and using them to re-create artificially an ethnic identity that has otherwise been lost. The word used to designate this process is the latinization of the English word "folklore": *folklorismus*, or "folklorism."

The Strategy of Folklorists

Most folklorists of today would agree that it is not their task to belittle such processes: rather, they should investigate, record, and analyze them objectively. Folklorism is a process that, when analyzed, can tell us something significant about human behavior and about ethnic identity. Nevertheless, it is somewhat disturbing to witness the participants in folklorism being unaware that they are engaged in a practice of self-delusion. No German coming from Germany

would recognize their newly acquired ethnic identity as being German.

The problem of understanding the ethnic identity of German-Americans is immense and complex. The question arises, where do we go from here? One of the most formidable problems facing us is that, in spite of the relatively large number of studies that have been made on German-Americans, we really have remarkably little hard data with which to work.[5] I believe that one of the first steps needed is for historians, ethnographers, sociologists, and folklorists to sit down and formulate meaningful questions — and then proceed to assemble the data and conduct the necessary analyses in order to answer them. Intensive study of farming techniques, barns, fences, house types, etc., will have to be made. Old records will have to be consulted to identify the immigrants and to determine what trades, crafts, and skills they brought with them to the New World. German-Americans still living will have to be identified and interviewed. We must learn the histories of individual families and how the entire immigration experience has affected them. We must contrast those who were displaced peoples, political refugees, refugees from poverty, etc., with each other. We must look for differences occasioned by regional ethnicity in the homeland, time frames of emigration, and the social classes that participated in the move to the New World.

Above all, we must try to determine if there is some overall matrix of behavior that is peculiar to Germans of diverse origins and — if it exists — determine the role it plays in shaping that elusive thing we call "national character." We must also probe deeply into the attitudes, fears, hopes, and dreams of the German immigrants; we must know what their dominating concerns were in regard to economic subsistence, religion, family, and ideology; and we must determine how these concerns shaped their view of the world.

It is on this latter point that I believe the work of folklorists could make valuable contributions. Folklorists, for example, have learned how to penetrate the surface of oral accounts of personal histories to find the meanings that they harbor. We have learned, for example, that such accounts may not be reliable data for the historian, because while they are always "true," they are not always factual. That is, the accounts people give of their own lives and of those of their ancestors are invariably colored by all the needs, concerns, and fears that dominate their lives.

A study conducted by one of my students offers vivid testimony to this phenomenon. A fourth-generation German-American, she investigated the accounts of her great-grandfather's immigration to California in the mid-nineteenth century as they were told by members of the family in the New and Old Worlds. Remarkably, she found that the accounts from the two sides of the ocean shared almost nothing in regard to actual factual data. Each branch of the family has remembered and framed the event according to its own needs and concerns — until two widely divergent accounts had emerged.

Such accounts, while providing little factual data to historians, nevertheless reveal a great deal about the people who tell them. Analysis of such personal histories provides insights into the identities of the individuals involved. When we have developed the ability to perceive the essence of such accounts, we will be a giant step closer to unraveling the mystery of ethnic identity. It is time for us to get down to work.

Donald J. Ward, Professor of Folklore at the University of California, Los Angeles, is a California native who took his bachelor's degree at San Francisco State and both master's and doctorate at UCLA. He has done extensive work at German universities, first as a student (University of Mainz, 1955-57) and more recently holding research fellowships: Alexander von Humboldt Foundation of West Germany in 1971-72 (at the University of Göttingen) and a Fulbright at the University of Freiburg in 1978-79. Professor Ward's extensive publications — chiefly in Germanic myths and legends — include *The Divine Twins, An Indo-European Myth in Germanic Tradition* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968); and *The German Legends of the Brothers Grimm*, now going through the press, which is translated, edited, and with a commentary by Donald Ward.

Notes

[1]Ingeborg Weber-Kellermann and Annemie Schenk, "Deutsche in Sudosteuropa. Zur Erforschung ihrer interethnischen Lebenswelt," *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, 73 (1977), 42-56.

[2]Rolf Wilhelm Brednich, "Projekt Saskatchewan. Neue Aufgaben und Methoden volkskundlicher Empirie," *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, 73 (1977), 24-41.

[3]Karl Ilg, "Das Brauchtum der deutschstammigen Siedler in Brasilian und Perus," in Klaus Beitl (ed.), *Volkskunde: Fakten und Analysen. Festgabe für Leopold Schmidt* (Wien, 1972), pp. 246-260.

[4]Dégh's essay will soon appear in the Hungarian journal, *Acta Ethnographica*.

[5]For bibilography on the topic of German Americans, one should consult the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* which for years has published an annual bibliography on the subject.

Turner's summer camp, Swan Lake, early 1890s.

District Turner's Festival held in 1891. Ladies group in club swinging drill at the State Fairgrounds. White stripes on the dresses indicate women from St. Paul. The others are from New Ulm and Duluth.

Turner House, New Ulm, ca. 1862.

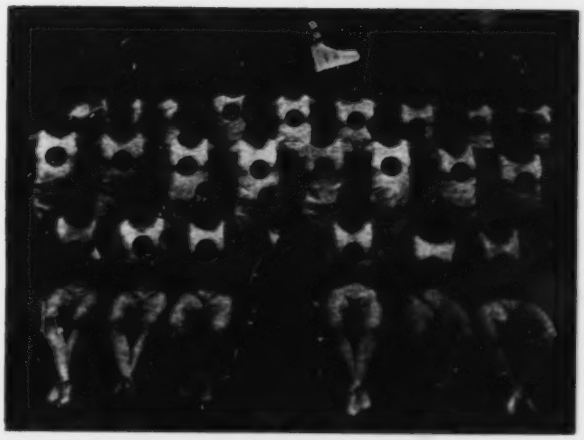
Masquerade at the Turner Hall, 3rd & Wabasha, St. Paul, ca. 1897.

Mr. & Mrs. William Elsner's wedding celebration at the Turner Hall, Summit & Wabasha, St. Paul, June 1917.

"West-seite Turnverein Liedertafel" on an outing to Mendota, ca. 1900.

The St. Anthony Society, St. Anthony Chapter of Turners, on a hike.

Members of the St. Paul Turnverein singing group, ca. 1910.



Turners win the cup in a meet, 1921.

Minnesota Turners at the National Turnfest in Indianapolis, June 21-24, 1905.

St. Paul Turnverein, Franklin Street, St. Paul.

St. Paul Turnverein, 596-698 Wabasha, St. Paul, ca. 1911.

Girls class, St. Paul Turnverein, 1875.

St. Paul Turnverein group, St. Paul, ca. 1920.

Class of Germania Turnverein.

St. Paul Turnverein group, St. Paul, ca. 1920.

Some General Questions Concerning the Maintenance of Ethnicity

by Elena Bradunas

I remember that, when I was a little girl, my grandmother told me a story about how St. Peter denied knowing Christ, and how after the cock crowed three times he realized what he had done and started to cry in remorse. He cried so much that the tears etched their way down his face and left deep ridges, forever marking his face with lines of sorrow. But the tears, she explained, were good for him — they helped to wash his soul.

I remember (I must have been five or so then) looking at her face, especially at the deep lines from nose to mouth, and asking if the lines on her face were also the marks of many tears. She answered "yes" and then turned to my grandfather sitting in an easy chair and said that he too had the same marks. He looked up from his paper and explained that his lines were from the tears he cried when he had to leave his farm in Lithuania, not knowing if he ever would come back. As he spoke tears came to his eyes, and I watched them trickle down the deep lines on his face.

From then on I took for granted that everybody cries and firmly believed that the lines, especially on older people, proved it. What a shock I got when in second grade (I remember ever so vividly) the teacher scolded my brother and he started crying. She then raised her voice, almost screaming, and told him and the rest of the class that only babies cry, and that boys especially, if they want to be considered men, must never, *never* shed a tear! I remember listening to her (we had double grades then, and second and first grades were together) and thinking, Where in the world did she learn that? Didn't she know about St. Peter and all the other people, men and women, who had tear-paths on their faces?

On our way home, I consoled my brother and told him it was O.K. to cry, repeating the story grandma had told me. I also instructed him that probably it would be better if we did our crying at home, since the teacher's world did not seem to be aware of grandmother's knowledge.

I give this as an example of one of my earliest recollections of the difference between the Lithuanian and American cultures that I faced as a youth. In one it was O.K. to cry and almost everyone did once in a while; in the other, though I also could see that people had cried (they all had lines), somehow it was not to be done in front of others.

Throughout my life I remained fascinated by the options and alternatives the two cultures offered me. Sometimes I was frustrated by the tensions that developed, and sometimes I felt lucky to have an extra language and culture to which I could relate. And I always looked around to see if others shared similar bi-cultural experiences.

My studies took me through the fields of anthropology and folklore, but always with a focus on the study of ethnic groups in America. This specialization grew and provided me with the opportunity, as a staff member, to contribute to the program of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. There I focus on the study and documentation of ethnic cultures in America, and these studies and perspectives assist in the cultural preservation movement which today surges stronger than ever.

The organizers of this conference on the German-Americans in Minnesota and its participants reflect the same impulse which led the Congress, in Public Law 94-201, to establish the American Folklife Center in 1976. The law directed the Center to preserve, document, and present aspects of American folklife, and defined folklife as "the traditional expressive culture shared within various groups in the United States: familial, ethnic, occupational, religious, regional." By organizing this forum where scholars can share their insights about the German-American heritage in a specific region of the U.S., you are undertaking an activity endorsed by the Congress, and it is fitting that public monies have come to your support. You are contributing to the increased awareness of America's pluralism and helping add detail to our country's cultural profile.

Only some twenty or even ten years ago it would have been difficult to organize such a conference, and it probably would have been next to impossible to tap public funds for financial support. Times have changed; successful meetings such as this one and ensuing activities among scholars and the lay public will help ensure continued support. I extend my sincere congratulations and wishes for a productive future.

An Ethnic Reawakening

In this paper I will make some observations about the current ethnic reawakening sweeping this country. I will not dwell on the specifics of the German-American heritage, since the information is presented well by the scholarly papers read in the conference sessions. Instead, I will speak in general terms, drawing on examples from a number of ethnic groups, knowing that you can make the correlations to the case of German-Americans.

It is important that each ethnic community be aware that similar concerns, questions, and issues are also being raised by other ethnic groups. A look at what other groups are doing and an assessment of how successful or unsuccessful their efforts are can widen

the perspective in which you place your own ethnic experience.

Having studied and documented ethnic community life at close range, and for the past three years from the "national" perspective in Washington, D.C., I have noted three major questions which members of an ethnic culture must answer as they take part in the ethnic "renaissance" across the nation. Scholars who study ethnicity, especially those who actively consult in community programs, confront the same questions.

The questions revolve around what (because of their alliterative quality) I sometimes call the three *P's* of ethnicity: 1) preservation, 2) presentation, and 3) participation. As questions they can be articulated as follows:

1) What to *preserve*? This calls for a look at the ethnic culture from a historical perspective.

2) What to *present*? This requires an assessment of various cultural traits for their representational quality. In other words, it calls for choices to be made about the appropriate public symbols for ethnic representation.

3) How to *participate*? This is formulated from an activist's perspective and is probably most challenging, both for individuals on the personal level and for communities on a more social level.

The first two questions ask *what*; the third, which asks *how*, is functionally related to the first two. To state it simply, once a person or a community decides what should be preserved, or presented, individuals must decide *how* to participate to help achieve these goals.

First, *What to Preserve*? Most often this question is posed with the implied assumption that something from the past is worth preserving for the future. This is a very natural assumption, since often our idea of what is valuable is shaped by our awareness of a particular item's importance to our ancestors, be it an artistic expression, custom, or tradition. Somehow we feel there is a consensus of approval made by previous generations on the aesthetic worth of songs, dances, or costume, and other forms of performing or decorative arts. Many ethnic groups, for these reasons, opt to stress activities which focus on the continuity and maintenance of those types of expressive traditions.

In Chicago, where the American Folklife Center conducted a study of over twenty ethnic communities, it found that many of them had organized song and dance ensembles and classes on folk crafts, such as Easter-egg decorating among the Ukrainians, *wycinanki* or paper-cutting among the Poles, sash weaving and wood carving among the Lithuanians, *rosemaling* among the Norwegians, and flower arrangement among the Japanese.[1] In each community there was also a proliferation of ethnic cookbooks — in a way providing substantiation for the old saying, "You are what you eat." In part their predilection towards these expressive arts, including foodways, was triggered by a kind of inherent respect, even reverence, for tradition and traditional aesthetics. On the other hand, it was also clearly affected by the group's perception of what outsiders would like to see as evidence of America's colorful plurality. It was primarily these cultural traits and aspects that were presented at festivals, bazaars, and other ethnic pageants — all very safe forums of cultural behavior, formally set apart from everyday life. These activities also attracted the younger members of those communities, partly as opportunities for social contact. Consequently, one can make a safe bet that such visible and tangible manifestations of ethnic culture will persist well into the future.

Commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the Orden der Hermanns-Söhne, St. Paul, 1895.

Components of Ethnic Identity

The more subtle components of ethnic heritage — such as language, beliefs, family customs, and calendrical celebrations — provide more complex information and are more deeply entrenched in personal daily life. They provide keys to attitudes and behavior — not only among the different groups but even among sub-groups within a particular ethnic community. In some cases, language was considered extremely important, so much so that school programs have been established to ensure that the younger generations get some formal training in reading and writing the language. The curriculum of such schools also stressed appreciation of literature and an awareness of the history of that culture in the Old World setting. Groups that had such educational programs were those with a strong ethno-religious identity, such as the Jews and Greeks, and also those that were recent immigrants, particularly political refugees since World War II, such as the Ukrainians, Poles, Lithuanians, and Hungarians.

Within these communities, however, there was also another stratum of people who, although they identified themselves with the same ethnic label, did not share the same kind of enthusiasm for the language, literature, or history. These were the older immigrants and their second and third generation descendants. Their wave had come before World War I, and most of them were of peasant background. For them preservation of ethnic identity was associated with church membership and the maintenance of certain domestic traditions — often preserved more out of habit than conscious awareness or choice. Their children or grandchildren were experiencing an "ethnic reawakening". With a greater range of choices, they were recognizing that the preparation of prescribed foods for holidays — and the special religious rituals and traditions like the patron saint's day celebration among the Slavs — provided them with "ethnic" markers and the opportunity to set themselves apart from mainstream Americans.

Thus, even within a single ethnic group there were varying ideas of what constitutes ethnic identity, and consequently different programs and activities which stressed different preservation tactics. And the meanings of their choices were vastly different. The same kind of plurality exists within German-American communities. While priority lists of preservation needs would vary among members of one community, there may also be a surprising amount of consensus. How to account for the differences and the similarities is a fertile field for scholarly investigation.

One facet which seemed to be overlooked by most of the ethnic groups in Chicago was the interest in their own communities' recent history. Very little was known about the history of churches, fraternal organizations, and earlier community activities. Or if some information was known, it was rather vague and did not have much detail. The same phenomenon emerges in other ethnic communities throughout America. Many German-American communities, like other groups, have far to go before their grassroots history is well documented. This is an area to which both scholars and lay community members can contribute.

The lack of interest in our unique ethnic-American experience has had some drastic consequences in the past. Fraternity and society records and documents have been destroyed because the organizations had become defunct and the materials no longer seemed relevant. The same kind of pragmatic rationalization had allowed old books and newspapers to be taken out to the garbage dumps. Churches and halls (sometimes even taverns) which were once important to community life were simply sold or razed without giving a second thought to their historical worth or community cultural significance.

Today,the situation seems to be changing slightly for the better. Partially due to the special interest in oral history, people are beginning to interview "old timers" from ethnic communities, and to appreciate the wealth of information that old scrapbooks and photo albums offer. This movement, however, is still in a rudimentary stage, and most ethnic communities have yet to discover the rich resources in their midst.

The Chicago Experience

The American Folklife Center's project in Chicago offers proof that scholars can be catalysts in encouraging documentation and preservation activities. At first, people were puzzled by our method of inquiry and could not understand why we were asking all those questions about a particular tavern, a grocery store, or an old hall long closed. But when a fieldworker spent several hours with the owner of a small shop, recording every spoken word and photographing the interior, the example encouraged others to heighten their esteem of, or at least to reassess their attitude toward, such "common" and "ordinary" history.

Our project has already had some effect on Chicago's communities. In the past year there has been an increase of special features in Chicago's ethnic press highlighting the grassroots history of the communities, and some ethnic radio programs have begun to feature interviews with old-timers who talk about "how things used to be," here and in the Old World.

The Chicago Ethnic Arts Project, then, can be considered a success only in so far as it stimulates ethnic communities to pay attention to their own recent history. By realizing the worth of their own community's history, members can gain a better appreciation for ongoing activities and make sure that proper documentation will be made in the future. It is up to the communities to implement such preservation. Outside scholars may come in to make the first steps, but project funds eventually run out and the formal project ends. If the history of ethnic communities in America is to become an integral part of America's history, it is up to the communities to show that they care.

Turning now to the second question — *what to present* — I do not need to elaborate on my observations that we often see at festivals the most visible and tangible manifestations of ethnic cultures. Foods, crafts, songs, and dances are chosen in part as a response to what outside viewers expect, but also as conscious symbols of ethnic identity. Their continuity with a past grounded in the original homeland provides a meaningful dimension for most individuals who become involved in both the preservation and presentation of those symbols.

Sometimes, however, the symbols selected for public display are no longer found or never even existed in the native countries. But as symbols they have "their own logic," and this too is an area for scholarly study. Each wave of immigrants brought their own cultural baggage, and from this trousseau they select what should be presented both to themselves and to outsiders. Sometimes the selection is the same for both audiences, but quite often there is some variation. It is this variation that intrigues scholars and that members of communities can best answer.

Ethnic Festivals

In Chicago, for example, almost every major ethnic group has a parade to celebrate their Independence Day. Elaborate floats are prepared and

The Sons of Hermann, New Ulm, 1890.

driven down State Street. Usually the themes of the floats harken back to a long-past history, as in the example of a six-foot Viking complete with loincloth, horned helmet, and axe in hand. Rarely is something from the ethnic community's present-day activities chosen for display. Even groups that have language schools, and thus obviously understand the importance of language retention, almost never give any hint to outsiders that this is an integral part of their ethnic-American experience. Groups that are members of the Orthodox faith value iconography for both its aesthetic and sacred qualities, but hardly ever do they place these sacred objects on public display. Many Italians choose not to publicize their patron saints' processions through their neighborhoods, saying that it is something personal which belongs to the community and that outsiders would probably not understand.

They may be accurate in their speculation, for a saint's statue loaded down with ribbons to which dollar bills are pinned may invite jeers and scoffs at their "superstitions." On the other hand, mainstream America may be ready and willing to look at other dimensions of ethnicity. But ethnic groups are so set in their preconceived notion of what should be displayed that they do not attempt anything new. Year after year, festival after festival, the same "eth-nic-nacs" are set on display tables, the same songs and dances are performed on stages, and the same floats roll along in the parades. In a way, tradition is being established, and this may be a major factor of appeal. From another angle, however, one cannot help wondering how long these manifestations will hold the outsider's interest.

A good alternative for presentation of culture has been developed by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington through their annual Festival of American Folklife on the Mall. Every year since 1967 ethnic cultures have been presented to the public. But instead of having just a display of objects, their professional fieldworkers scout the country and bring back not only examples of a particular craft but also the individuals who make them. In their introductions, the professional presentors (who often are scholars) explain the history of the craft, give biographical information about the artist, and describe past and present life in the artist's ethnic community. When comparing the art work to that which once existed in the original homeland, changes are often noted in style or material and are easily attributed to the American context in which the artist and his art find themselves.

The same is done with the performing arts. Instead of having one dance or song follow another, care is taken to explain the history and meaning of the artistic expressions. After the performances, the public usually has a chance to talk to performers and learn more about how such activity fits into their daily lives. Many of the outsiders are surprised to hear about the required hours of practice and marvel at their dedication. The public goes away from these festivals not only entertained but informed. Questions are raised, stereotypes dissolved. Occasionally, in such intimate interactions between ethnic artists and the public, one can overhear a reference to a story, or a legend, or some other value or attitude that is a part of a person's deeper and more private sense of ethnic identity.

I mention the Smithsonian's Festival as an example of what can be done in sharing and presenting ethnic cultures with the general public. The fact that scholars are involved in mediating the exchange is an important asset, and should be noted by cultural

specialists who ponder ways to serve the groups they study.

The third question — *how to participate* in the maintenance of ethnic heritage — is something which individuals must answer first in terms of their own personal enrichment, and seond in terms of enriching or expanding activities within their communities.

Obviously, if a person belongs to a group that has language schools, song and dance ensembles, its own church, fraternal organizations, ethnic press, and ethnic radio, then there are many options. On the other hand, many individuals who are just now discovering their heritage do not have community activities in which they can immerse themselves. There are still many ways in which they can explore their cultural legacy, ways which take them beyond the simple donning of a costume or some superficial symbol solely for public display.

Family and Local Histories

Researching family history, for example, requires tenacity and perseverance, but it can prove extremely rewarding in the long run. Individuals who start their search for ethnic identity through careful research of the family's background in the Old Country, and its subsequent history in America, often attain a better sense of their heritage than those who simply engage in the perpetuation of standard community activities. This kind of careful research can provide more information about the history and authenticity of art forms and symbols. It also helps ensure that public presentations of ethnic cultures not only entertain but also inform.

For communities that wish to expand their programs and activities, there remains the task of researching their own recent local history. Old photographs, once copied and properly annotated, can make an excellent exhibit not just in the community's church hall but also in the local public library.

Harold Arndt of Comfrey, Minn., weaving rugs at the New Ulm Heritagefest, 1979.

Similarly, collecting old letters, materials from ethnic presses, and, of course, oral history can provide worthwhile projects. Because they often bring the younger generations in touch with the community's senior citizens, such activities can be especially gratifying to all involved.

Thinking of how scholars can participate in the maintenance of ethnic cultures, I do not need to say much to the participants of this conference. You already are doing it by engaging in cultural studies and sharing your findings through publications and conferences such as this one. I can only hope you will continue with similar endeavors. Most important, please continue your dialogue with the lay members of your group and share your expertise with them. The search for roots is primarily a grassroots phenomenon, but scholars who are cultural specialists can be of great service by helping interested individuals and communities dig deeper, much deeper, for their roots.

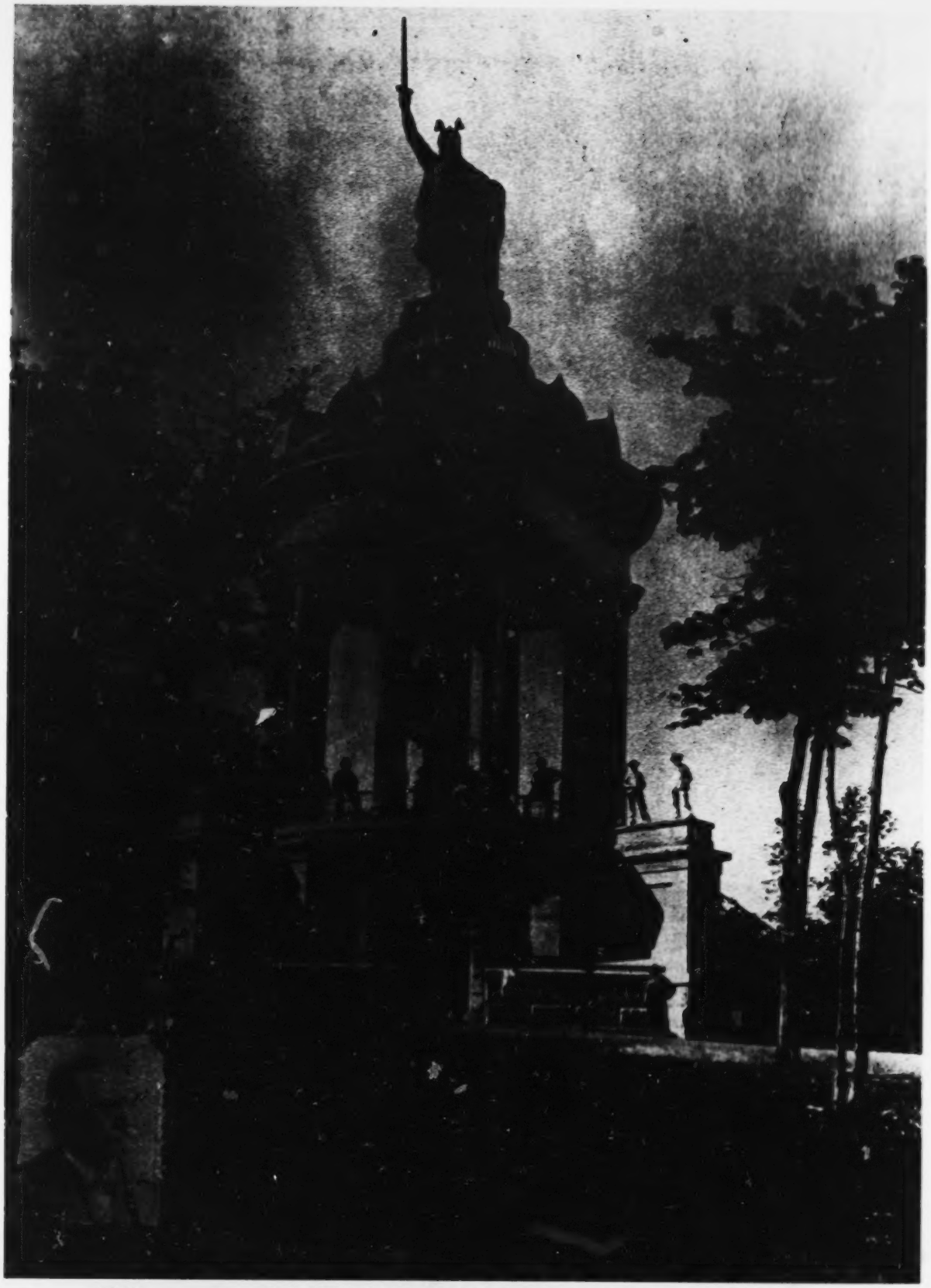
Ethnicity and ethnic identity will continue to be a viable part of our American experience only to the extent that they are integrated into people's personal lives. Each individual makes his own choices and decisions, assessing what has been handed down through generations, or what is learned through research, and finally deciding if any of it will have special meaning in his daily life. Every individual has many facets to his identity, and ethnicity is just one of them. How and when that ethnic identity comes to the foreground depends on circumstances, situations, and — most of all — the will of the individual.

Allow me to close by returning to how I learned the rationale for crying. Obviously I do not hold a belief in the legend with the intensity that I once had as a child. Now I know where wrinkles come from, and I understand why crying often should be a private act. On the other hand, if I ever have children of my own, I will pass the story on to them. Throughout my life the poetry of the legend has helped me feel more human. Many of the elements that come down to us in our ethnic heritage have that power within them. Let us make the best use of them and pass them to the coming generations so they may have more options to choose from.

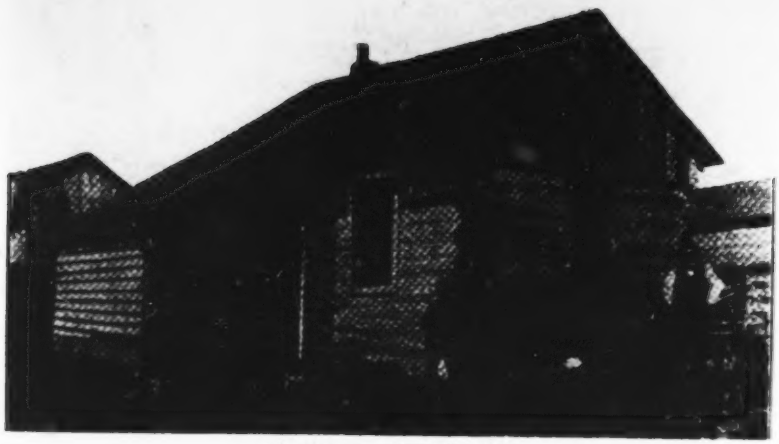
Elena Bradunas, ethnic folklife specialist for the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress, was born in Germany of Lithuanian parentage and came to the United States as a child (naturalized in Baltimore in 1959). She has a B.A. from the University of Chicago (anthropology), took an M.A. at UCLA (folklife and mythology), and is researching a Ph.D. dissertation for the University of Indiana Folklore Institute in folklore and ethnicity among immigrant groups in the United States. She has taught Lithuanian language, literature, and folklore in Chicago, Los Angeles, and at the University of Indiana; and she has done varied types of editorial work on ethnic and folklore manuscripts, tapes, and journals. From 1972-77 she directed extensive fieldwork and research in ethnic communities, notably the anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania and the Lithuanian community of Chicago.

Notes

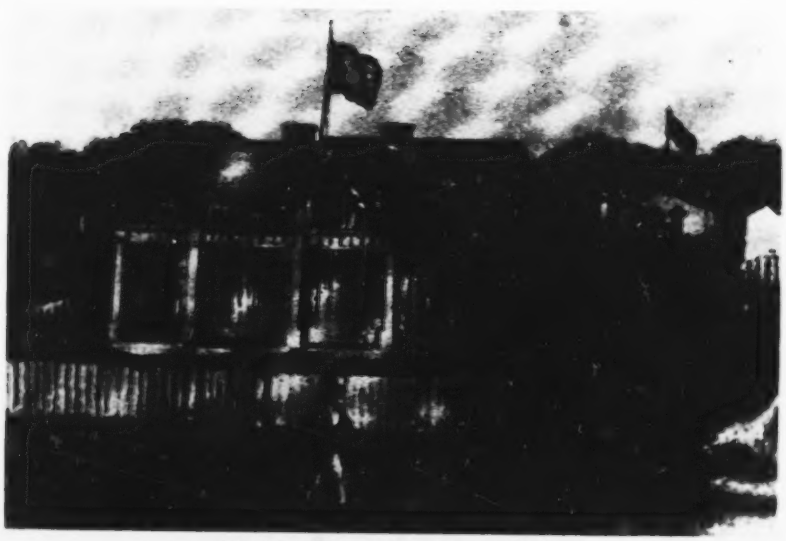
[1] *A Report on the Chicago Ethnics Arts Project*, prepared by the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., January 1978.



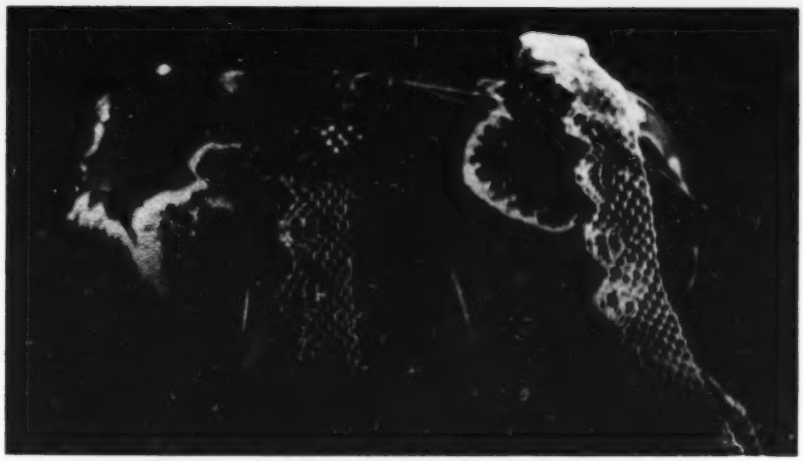
The Hermann monument in New Ulm with a photo of the artist, Julius Berndt, in the lower left hand corner.



A log house at New Ulm, 1862.

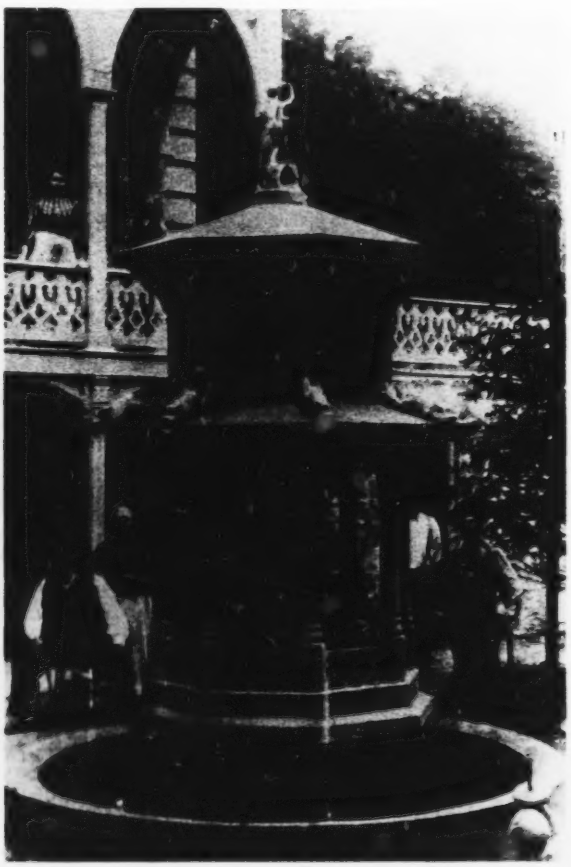


The Naegele home, New Ulm, ca. 1860.



Kloeppeling, a folk art demonstrated at the New Ulm Heritagefest, 1979.

National symbol for the Sons of Hermann, the Hermann monument in New Ulm.



Mr. and Mrs. August Schell at home, New Ulm.

Part II.
Architectural Styles and Material Culture of German-Americans in Minnesota

Volk's Brewery, Alexandria, 1876.

La Vern Rippley has a double or triple claim to authority in this field: his *1976* book, *The German Americans*, published by Twayne (a widely known and distributed general overview), the dozens of pieces he has published on Minnesota German log cabins and barns (in local newspapers), and articles on the German press and the German language in Minnesota — published in learned journals here and abroad. His essay in this collection reflects all of these perspectives.

Rippley begins with an overview of the German immigration to Minnesota — the waves and patterns of settlement, the resulting concentrations of German-American population, and the establishment of newspapers, banks, churches, breweries, and cultural centers. He goes on to assess the "Germanness" of farm buildings and houses and explains the other forces which complicate the issue: availability of materials, changing life-styles and farm practices, and the pressure of new American influences.

Rippley writes like a historian, says Gary Stanton, who goes on to demonstrate how a folklorist looks at architecture and artifacts. Stanton points out that his own knowledge of German-American material culture is grounded in an Indiana experience. Thomas Harvey, newly arrived in Minnesota, acknowledges some acquaintance with a German-settled area of Texas. Both Stanton and Harvey write more generally than Rippley about architecture and artifacts. Both raise questions about the persistence or decline of traditions, and point out that much more remains to be done before these matters can be understood.

Margaret MacFarlane's response to Rippley reflects her own experience in recent years as director of the Minnesota Valley Restoration Project — "an outdoor, living museum that attempts to give an authentic reflection of the ethnic specifics . . . of the lower Minnesota River Valley . . . 1840-1910." The houses and artifacts assembled at Shakopee are roughly half German, according to MacFarlane. Concentrating her study on the Leo Berger family, she tells how family traditions helped to reconstruct buildings that had changed their functions and appearance.

Patterns and Marks of German Settlement in Minnesota

by La Vern J. Rippley

Widely different systems of ideas and daily habits influence what people do and what they become. Systems of thoughts and practice gradually evolve, spread, diffuse, and eventually change environments. Religion is one such system that both influences and reflects the human environment. Another is public education, especially if it becomes state-financed, state-controlled, and therefore a universal institution for the entire nation, as occurred in the United States with the decline of parochial schools. Agriculture in the United States is another such system, one that has been profoundly involved in the reshaping of plants and in the genetic restructuring of animals for human purposes. Transportation systems, too, unalterably determine the positioning and growth of cities, the development of suburbs, the disintegration of small towns, and the death of institutions like the one-room local school.

A similar force in the material culture of a people is ethnicity or nationality background. As Hildegard Binder Johnson has written, "Delineation of the factors influencing geographical distribution of the immigration groups in the United States is essential for understanding the country's sectionalism and regionalism."[1] Social, political, religious, and economic conditions of a region vary considerably, if subtly, as the nationality of the settlers in an area changes from region to region in the state of Minnesota.[2] No one would argue, for instance, that the fishing habits and hunting traditions of the Indians on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation differ widely from the practices of the Finns in Becker County near Detroit Lakes, or in St. Louis County north of Duluth; yet these Finns on both sides of the Leech Lake Reservation are compelled to cope with similar geographic and climatic situations.[3] Superficially the difference between the landscapes settled by Finns as opposed to those peopled by the Germans are far less striking. Although the lives of Minnesota Finns and Germans are worlds apart, not only differences in nationality background but the timing of their arrival in Minnesota caused these differences. Due to political, economic, and transportation factors in the home country, the Finns did not arrive in Minnesota until the end of the nineteenth century — by which time the Germans, Norwegians, Swedes, Bohemians, and native-born Americans had already claimed the best farm land.

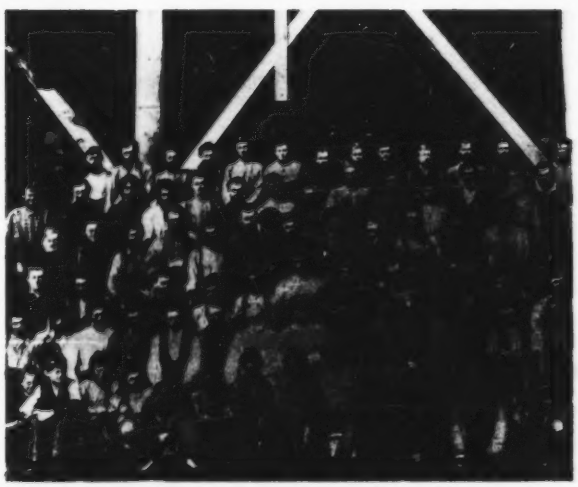
In the process of selecting lands on which to settle, immigrants from Germany have often been credited with instinctively selecting good soils, and it is true even today that farmers of German descent in Minnesota own farms with good soil. But this theory, in spite of intriguingly suggestive studies by Joseph Schafer on the Germans in Wisconsin,[4] has never been conclusively proved — nor have the Germans always selected the right soil wherever they have settled in America. In the counties of Brown, Sibley, Carver, Nicollet, and Scott the soils are superb, but they are less than first rate in Stearns, Benton, and Winona. Yet all of these counties were populated with a high percentage of German immigrants. In the matter of land selection, immigrants were constrained in their movement from east to west by their routeways, which — in the 1850-1870 period when the Germans were arriving — were rivers. Frequently, if not always, riverways were synonymous with valleys, which were wooded. As the eastern woodlands gave way to the middle west prairies of Minnesota and Iowa, the river valleys were the western-most tentacles of the familiar eastern woodlands. Undoubtedly, less desirable land near waterways was settled before the better prairie lands at a distance from transportation routes. Like other settlers, Germans readily claimed these secondary lands. Rarely if ever did immigrants leapfrog across open prairie to reach wooded areas beyond. But of course they probably often bypassed upland prairies when they followed wooded river valleys to reach new

William Hamm, Sr.

First Schulenburg sawmill at Stillwater, built in 1855 and burned in 1874.

Second Schulenburg-Boeckler mill at Stillwater, built in 1876 and burned in 1892.

Logs at Schulenburg-Boeckler sawmill, 1896.



Sawmill crew at Schulenburg-Boeckler mill, 1871.

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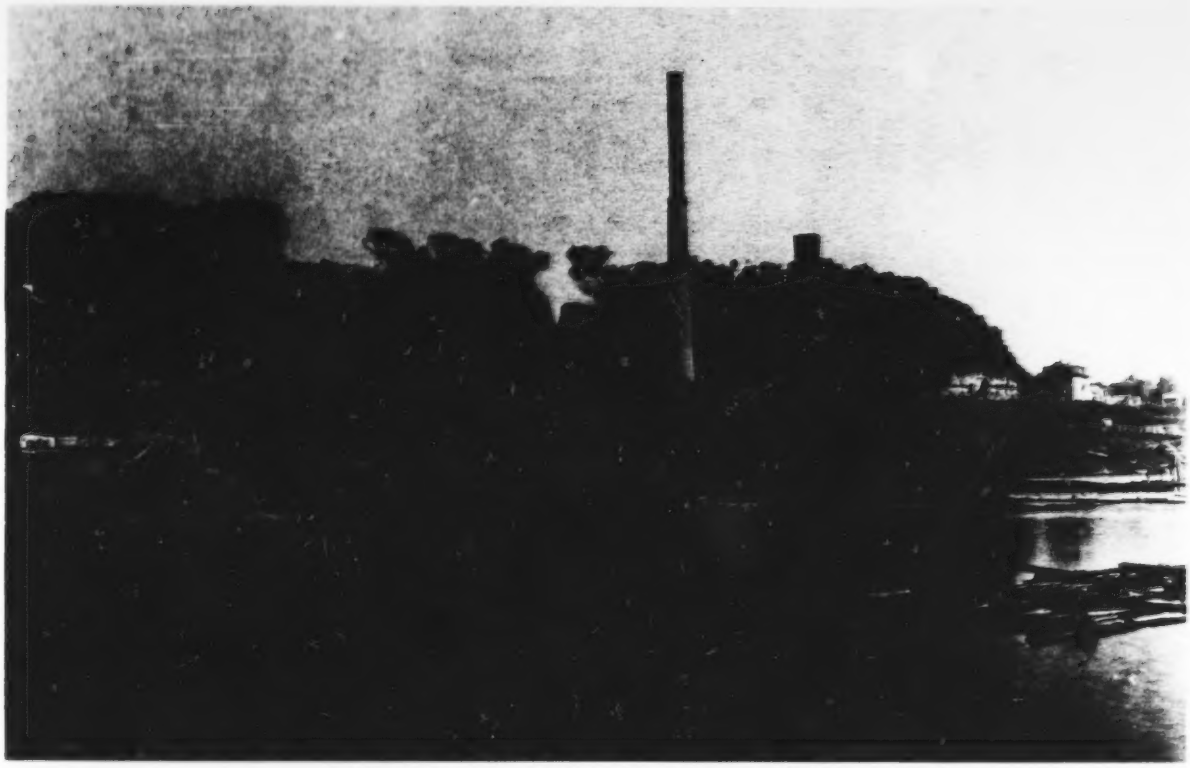


Third Schulenburg-Boeckler mill at Stillwater, 1894-1907.

lands upstream. In southeastern Minnesota upland prairies were settled before wood lands in the valleys if a road had already been cut across the prairie.[5] Accessibility (or, in other words, transportation routes) was critical in determining where Germans settled.

Four German Concentrations

Consequently, the Germans settled in four major concentrations in Minnesota, all of which are along and (for the most part) west of the major rivers of Minnesota.[6] All of the following counties had a German population between 1850 and 1900 which was in excess of fifteen percent of the total population, and in most counties considerably more than fifteen percent. In southeastern Minnesota there were the two Mississippi counties of Winona and Wabasha. North of the Twin Cities the Germans were numerous in Benton and Stearns counties, both of which lie adjacent to the Mississippi, east and west respectively. In south central Minnesota the Germans were settled rather densely in a belt running from St. Paul southwestward to New Ulm, with large concentrations in Ramsey, Dakota, Carver, Scott, Sibley, Nicollet, Blue Earth, and Brown counties, all of which were adjacent to the Minnesota River. McLeod (Glencoe, Hutchinson), Le Sueur, Waseca, and Martin (Fairmont) counties also harbored many Germans. In these counties, the cities where major German communities developed were St. Cloud and Winona, St. Paul and Minneapolis, New Ulm, Mankato, Shakopee, and Chaska. As a rule the Germans did not predominate in the major towns, nor did they arrive in time to claim the easily accessible lands close to the rivers. Arriving *en masse* between 1860 and 1880, after many native Americans had already settled, the Germans had to move inland from the waterways, especially on the lands west of the Minnesota River between Minneapolis and New Ulm, i.e. in the counties of Carver, McLeod, and Sibley — as well as Stearns County, west of St. Cloud.[7]

Key factors of material culture that emanated from these settlers were the German-language newspapers. The very first German paper in Minnesota was the *Minnesota Thalbote*, published in Chaska by Friedrich Ortwein and Albert Wolff. Within a decade German-language newspapers were coming out of the four Minnesota-German publishing centers of New Ulm, St. Paul, St. Cloud, and Winona.[8] Eventually St. Paul became the primary German publishing center in Minnesota when such prominent organs as the *Minnesota Staats-Zeitung*, the *St. Paul Tägliche Volkszeitung*, the *National Farmer und Familian Journal*, and the Roman Catholic diocesan weekly, *Der Wanderer* all appeared and abounded for their large circulations in St. Paul. Always a stronghold in German literary culture, Winona received prominence far beyond the Minnesota state boundaries when the Leicht Press, long noted for its German-language publications, began purchasing and producing the German-language newspapers for a large number of smaller German communities throughout the Midwest, a scurrying activity that carried beyond the conclusion of World War II.[9]

In the newspapers published in these German areas, there were countless references to the multi-faceted material culture of the Germans in Minnesota.

Wendelin Grimm homestead, Carver County.

Grimm alfalfa; original plot seeded by Wendelin Grimm, 1858. Photo taken in 1924.

A prominent example was the German bank of St. Paul, headed by the brothers F. and G. Willius. All financial services, be they in Germany or in America, could be handled through the offices of this bank. For a time F. Willius also served as Prussian Consul in St. Paul and, according to the advertisements, could handle virtually all problems that might arise for the immigrant family from Germany: transferral of funds, currency exchange, estate planning, the probating of wills, and virtually any other conceivable problem. With the passage of time the bank expanded into the general banking market, called itself the Germania Bank, and was so prosperous that it could construct its own rather prominent building in the heart of downtown St. Paul.[10] Winona, too had its German bank which began as "Die deutsche Bank" in 1892 and was fused into what today is known as the Merchants National Bank of Winona. It is a beautiful, early twentieth century structure by the Sullivan School of Architecture, Purcell, Feick and Elmslie, and was luckily saved from the wrecking ball through local restoration efforts in 1972.[11]

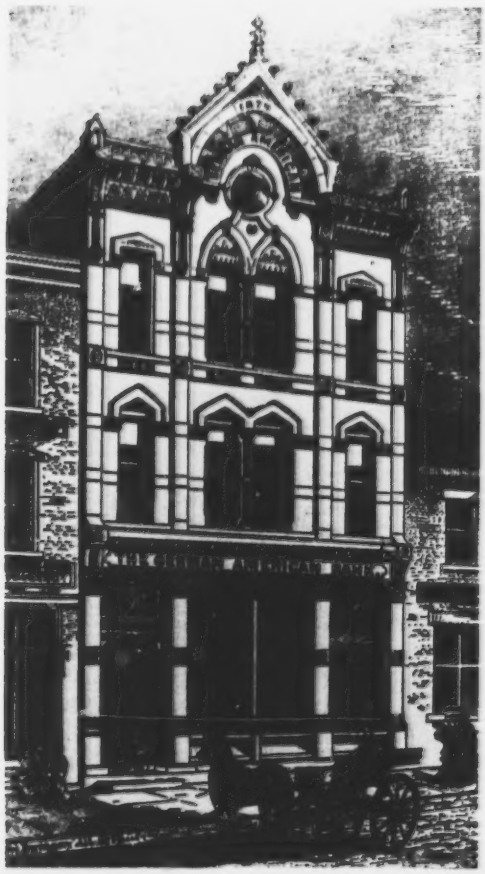
Another manifestation of the prominence of German material culture in St. Paul was the construction of *Das deutsche Haus* — to be used not only for the presentation of German theater to the German citizens of the Twin Cities and Minnesota but also to serve as a headquarters for all the German organizations of the capital city.[12] Completed in 1921, the building was eventually torn down to make room for the expansion of state buildings and the mall that presently graces the state capitol.

Das deutsche Haus in St. Paul was a late product of German material culture in Minnesota. Much earlier were such social structures as the *Turnverein* and the buildings this organization erected. "Turnerism" originated in Germany when Friedrich Ludwig Jahn established the first hall at Berlin in 1811.[13] The movement was launched as a revolutionary action by romantic, discontented intellectuals intent on freeing Germany from dictatorial Napoleonic rule and on having a voice in a burgeoning young nation. Father Jahn, as he was known, was convinced that there could be no rebirth of Germany unless its people became healthy in mind; and this, he felt, could not be accomplished unless they first became strong in body through a planned program of physical training. Juvenal's phrase of *mens sana in corpore sano* was their adopted motto, and a grand strategy of political unity with democratic principles became their goal. Once the presence of Napoleon in Germany had been eradicated, however, the Prussian government (with the support of the Metternich system in Austria) clamped down on the followers of Jahn, whom they had previously abetted because they aroused indignation against the French. Under the notorious Karlsbad Decrees of October, 1819, Jahn's gymnastic fields were closed, radicals were imprisoned, and the universities and the press came under censorship.

The Founding of New Ulm

When the Revolutions of 1848 erupted in Germany, Turner associates like Franz Siegel and Albert Wolff, both destined to become prominent Minnesotans, fled Germany for the United States. In the minds and hearts of such Forty-eighters as these, the Turner movement came to the United States where the first Turnverein was organized in Cincinnati in October, 1848: within two years it built the first Turner Hall in North America. The following year the Turners started publishing their monthly magazine, and to this day they are still active — nowhere more so than in New Ulm. The establishment of New Ulm was set in motion by one of the original members of the Cincinnati Turnverein, William Pfaender, who "conceived the idea of a settlement of workers and freethinkers in the Northwest where good soil and lumber were abundant, where each family could have its garden plot, and where a socialistic society by means of

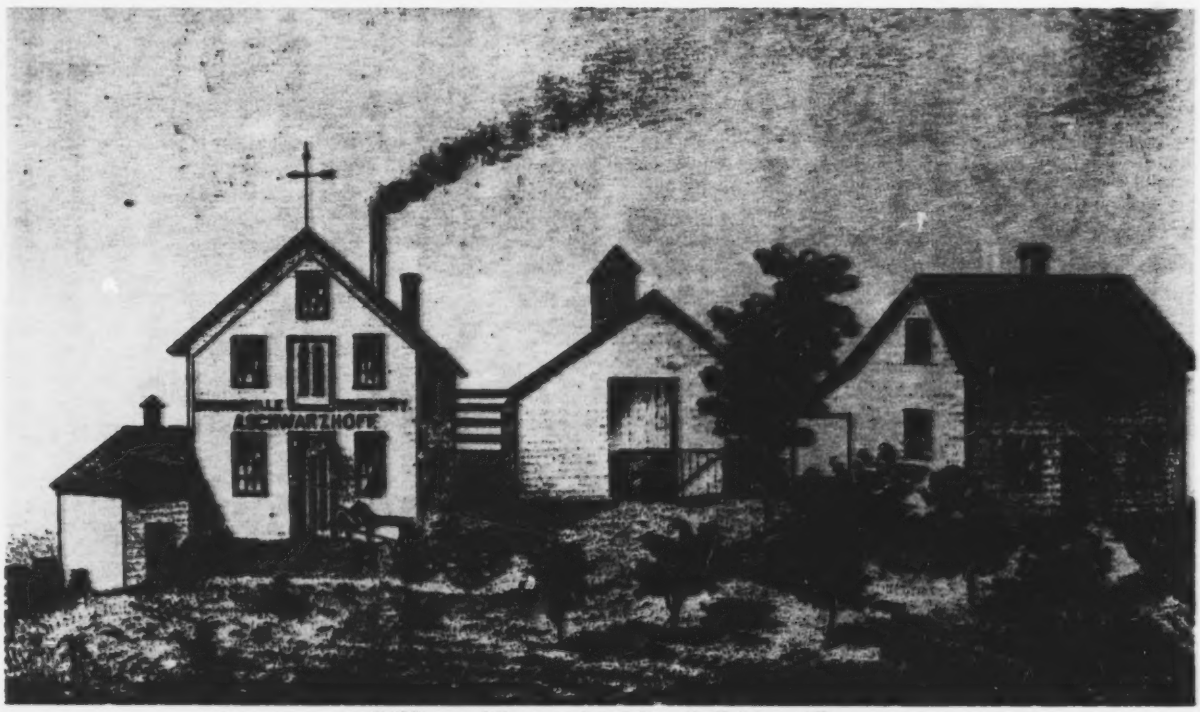
Third crop of Grimm alfalfa, ca. 1910.



German American Bank, 94 E. 3rd Street, St. Paul, ca. 1880.

Germania Bank Building, 6 W. 5th Street, St. Paul, ca. 1895.

Deutsches Haus, 438 Rice Street, St. Paul, ca. 1920.



Buildings and Brewery of A. Schwarzhoff, Brownsville.

public ownership could flourish, free from the evils of unemployment and want."[14] Practical gymnastics were to be wedded to socialistic organization in a unique way here on the frontier, for Minnesota was not yet a state. In effect, the idealists were leaving the country, not entirely unlike the Mormons had done, to have the opportunity to establish their very own way of life unencumbered by existing laws and customs.

Called sometimes the "Settlement Society of the "Socialistic Turnerbund," at other times the "Colonization Society of North America" and the "Turner Colonization Society of Cincinnati," the group eventually joined hands with another organization called the "Chicago Land Verein." The latter, led by Ferdinand Beinhorn from Braunschweig had determined to find a place for immigrant workmen, "beyond the reach of greedy land speculators," where they might "obtain government land and create a model town, which should be surrounded by gardens."[15] After putting together an association of sixty members in the fall of 1853, the Chicago society grew to 800 members by April of 1854, nearly all workingmen. Supported by Chicago's Turners, scouts made their way that summer to stake claim to the future city of New Ulm, a site with "wide bench-like plateaus rising gradually and stretching along the valley several miles, like the tiers of an enormous amphitheater."[16] Strapped for funds in July, 1856, the Chicago Land Verein under Beinhorn discovered a "savior" in the person of William Pfaender, who had come, flushed with cash, from a Cincinnati Turner group — which joined the claimants from Chicago to form the new "German Land Association."[17] With ample funds Turners set about the business of allocating lots, constructing sawmills, and building a flourmill and warehouses, together with other structures to house the machinery necessary for a growing community.

Out of these enterprising pioneers arose today's lovely city of New Ulm, with its centrally located Turner Hall. More than any other city in Minnesota, New Ulm itself is evidence of the material culture of the Germans in Minnesota. Streets in the city were laid out according to the traditional American grid pattern, but with a distinct difference. They paralleled the river and took advantage of the terraces rising back from the water's edge — reflecting the utopian ideals of the founders. Unlike so many other American cities of that period, New Ulm does not turn its back to (and empty its sewage into) the river. Rather, it incorporates a central shopping district running parallel to two transportation arteries: the river on the north, which once functioned as an important shipping facility for the city, and a broad, double-laned boulevard which carried highway-oriented traffic adjacent to the downtown center.

Many buildings exhibit a German flavor, some genuine, others mere imitations. The Hauenstein (now a deteriorating ruin) and Schell breweries typify the German way not only by their product but in the subtlety of their architecture. Both were once proud of their European-style gardens, and even today the yard at Schell's retains its special, characteristic markings. Both of these structures — as well as the Brown County Courthouse, Holy Trinity Cathedral, Loretto Hospital, and some of the buildings downtown — suggest the German character of their origins. The observer is struck, however, by the puzzling ambivalence about certain imitations — such as the old post office, the armory, and even the newer addition to Turner Hall. One doubts whether the influences behind these structures are really German.

There is no doubt about the Germanness of the landmark statue of Hermann the Cheruscan. It is a smaller-scale, though somewhat accurate, depiction of

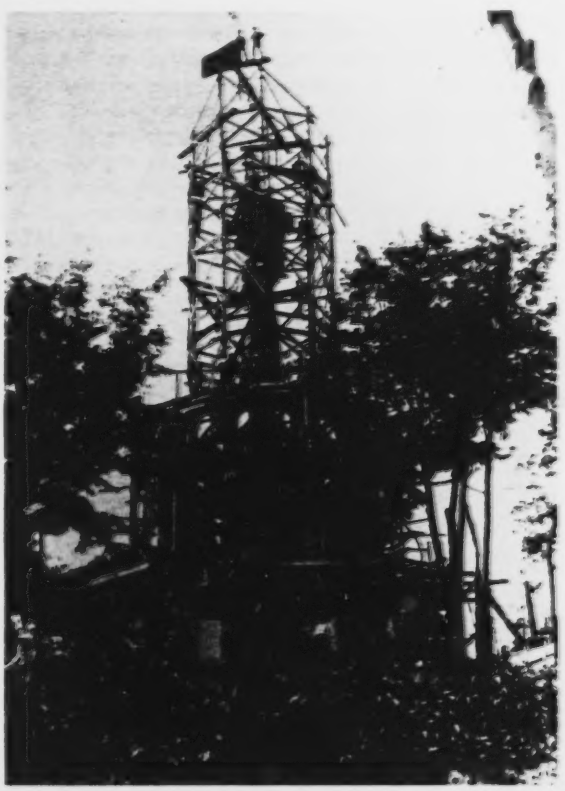
the monument erected in Detmold, Germany, in 1833, to commemorate the tribal general who led German tribesmen in their defeat of the Roman army under Varus in the year 9 A.D. Curiously, the American version is fully clothed, whereas the German original displayed only scanty coverings, perhaps reflecting a more puritanical American viewpoint about statuary. Another unanswerable curiosity for the current-day visitor is just why Americans of German birth and descent chose this particular German when they founded their fraternal order, "the Sons of Hermann," and patterned their nationality symbol on this particular German who, in the final analysis, was not very German. At any rate, from atop this 102-foot monument with its 32-feet-high bronze statue, the observer has a commanding view of the one American city founded by German Turners. Exemplifying the modern-day admiration of New Ulmers for this heritage was the erection in the summer of 1979 of a medieval *Glockenspiel* (clock tower) in the heart of downtown.

New Ulm was certainly not the only German community with German breweries and flamboyant architecture. In Minneapolis the Grain Belt Brewery and in St. Paul the Schmidt Brewery exemplify a style of nostalgic Gothic which the Germans in Minnesota were fond of after the Prussian wars of unification which culminated in the founding of the German Empire at Versailles in 1871. These structures typify on a grand scale what was thrust into the home of August Schell by its architect, Herman G. Schapekahm — a flamboyance unknown in earlier German-American structures. Born in Germany in 1855, Schapekahm came at age sixteen to New Ulm, where he learned to be a carpenter. Subsequently he studied architectural drawing and building in St. Louis from 1878 to 1880, and then became an architect and contractor in New Ulm. Many of the largest buildings in New Ulm were erected under his direction or design.

A Style of Pomp and Celebration

Whether the building was a new brewery, a bank, or just a family home, the tendency in the 1880s among the German-Americans in Minnesota was to erect monuments to the new, triumphant Germany. Following the successful process of unification, the German states thrived under simplified trade restrictions. As a result, industrialization progressed rapidly and, whether in the old German homeland or in the New World, it had finally become a matter of pride to be known as German. Criticism of the German government disappeared among members of the German communities abroad, and the liberal, intellectual, and cultural leadership provided by groups like the Forty-eighters fell on deaf ears. The German-American press after 1870 grew less concerned about liberalism and the sorry state of German fragmentation and, as if seduced, began reporting with pride the statesmanlike policies of Bismarck. That the political liberalism for which the Forty-eighters had fought so hard found no acceptance in the government of the German Empire hardly mattered, or (perhaps more accurately) was never perceived by the Germans in America.[18]

Out of this new attitude among the Germans in Minnesota grew an architectural style of pomp and celebration. What mattered to Minnesota's Germans after 1870 was not what it was really like back in Germany: what mattered was what they *thought* it was like back there. Newcomers from the empire were no longer predominately rural peasants. Now they were largely industrial workers and artisans. In Germany Bismarck enjoyed remarkable success with his state socialism and insurance programs for the working class. Nevertheless, his *Kulturkampf* against the Catholic Church as expressed most fiercely in the May Laws, and his constant needs for a draft to satisfy the manpower needs of his military machine, still caused many to emigrate to the United States. This "forced" migration occurred between 1874 and 1888. Reflecting the phenomenal prosperity of a newly industrial nation, emigration from Germany to the United States slackened considerably after 1890. Simultaneously, in Minnesota especially, the era of free lands and frontier opportunities had drawn to a close, and thus the new immigrants were attracted only to the manufacturing centers.



The erection of the Hermann monument in New Ulm.

The aforementioned breweries, the Schell House in New Ulm, and countless other examples are the products of post-1870 German immigrants. The earlier Germans built simple houses on the American frontier in the styles of peasants everywhere. Unskilled in their own right, they readily copied American patterns. The intellectual and liberal Forty-eighters also wanted to build in the American style, especially if it was in the Greek revival style. Jefferson appealed to them enormously, and his architectural style connoted to the Forty-eighter visions of liberty and freedom from oppression. When the influence of the Americanizers

Frederick Weyerhaeuser.

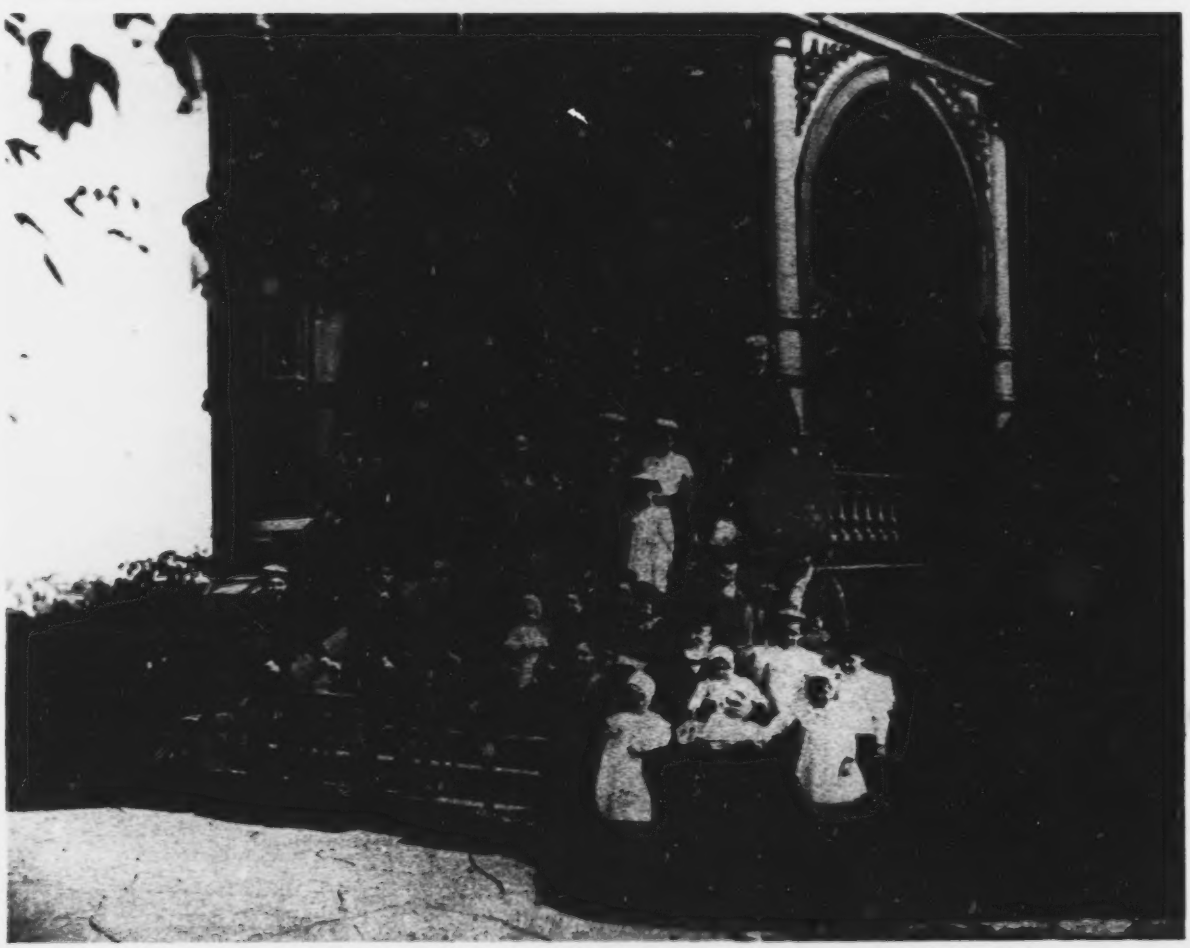
Charles A. Weyerhaeuser.

Frederick Weyerhaeuser birthplace in Germany.

among the Germans in Minnesota began to fade in the wake of the Bismarckian success, attitudes about architecture began to change. Free-thinkers whose anti-clerical stances characterized certain German settlements before 1870 were rapidly being outnumbered by rigidly conservative Catholic immigrants from Germany in the period after 1870. Staunchly conservative German Lutherans also poured into the state. As a result, the area around St. Cloud became a distinctly Catholic-German area; and New Ulm, rather than continuing its blatantly liberal cast, also gradually turned into a religiously tri-partite German community. German Catholics increased after the first parish was founded for them by Father Alexander Berghold in 1869,[19] and many conservative Wisconsin Synod Lutherans also found a haven in New Ulm. The result was a Lutheran-Catholic-Free Thinker triangle within the basically German community.

As all of these different German groups enjoyed the prosperity of the latter half of the nineteenth century in Minnesota, they became possessed gradually of a nostalgia for Germany. In America the German language press played on this nostalgic picture of the former homeland. Little was told about the dirty coal mines of the Ruhr and not very much about the booming industrial cities of Berlin, Essen, Rostock, Stuttgart, or Hamburg. There was a lot more fascination for the neo-Gothic castles of the Bavarian King, Ludwig II, of the beautiful Rhine Valley, and of the baroque churches of southern Germany. As a result, when the Germans thought of erecting edifices in the post-1870 period in Minnesota, they nostalgically conceived German architecture in one of two ways — either in neo-Gothic patterns gone wild like a Disneyland fairy castle, or in the red, gold, and blue hues of south German baroque. Most of the German-inspired Catholic churches in Minnesota reflect this baroque affection, whether they stand in St. Paul or Collegeville, in Winona, New Trier, Melrose, Albany, Adrian, New Ulm, or Fulda.

In a few communities in Minnesota two Catholic churches can be found almost side by side, built to accommodate two different nationality groups. Such churches must be viewed as standing monuments to what each nationality was willing to erect as its own symbol. Examples are the German and Irish parishes in Caledonia;[20] a similar situation in Springfield, Hastings, and St. Paul; and the German and Polish churches in Browerville and Winona. As a rule, the Polish were the most generous in their support of elegant churches, the Germans more conservative but solid, and the Irish more carefree and less willing to build monuments to themselves. Not until far into the twentieth century was the backbone of the old baroque pattern of German architecture broken in Minnesota. No doubt the very finest, as well as one of the very few



Theodore Hamm and Family in front of Theodore Hamm residence, 671 Cable, St. Paul.

William Hamm, Sr. and Family (William Sr., William Jr., Margaret Louise) and Marie Scheffer Hamm.

Hamm Brewery and William Hamm, Sr., residence at 671 Cable Ave. Taken from 7th Street looking up Swede Hollow, ca. 1900.

William Hamm, Jr. (on right) with Ary J. Scheffer (left) and Margaret G. Scheffer (center).

examples of modern German religious architecture in Minnesota, is the chapel of St. John's Abbey at Collegeville, designed by the great *Bauhaus* member, Marcel Breuer. With its century-old red brick quadrangle now being restored and remodeled, St. John's represents the most remarkable blends of pre-1870 and post-1960 German architecture in America.

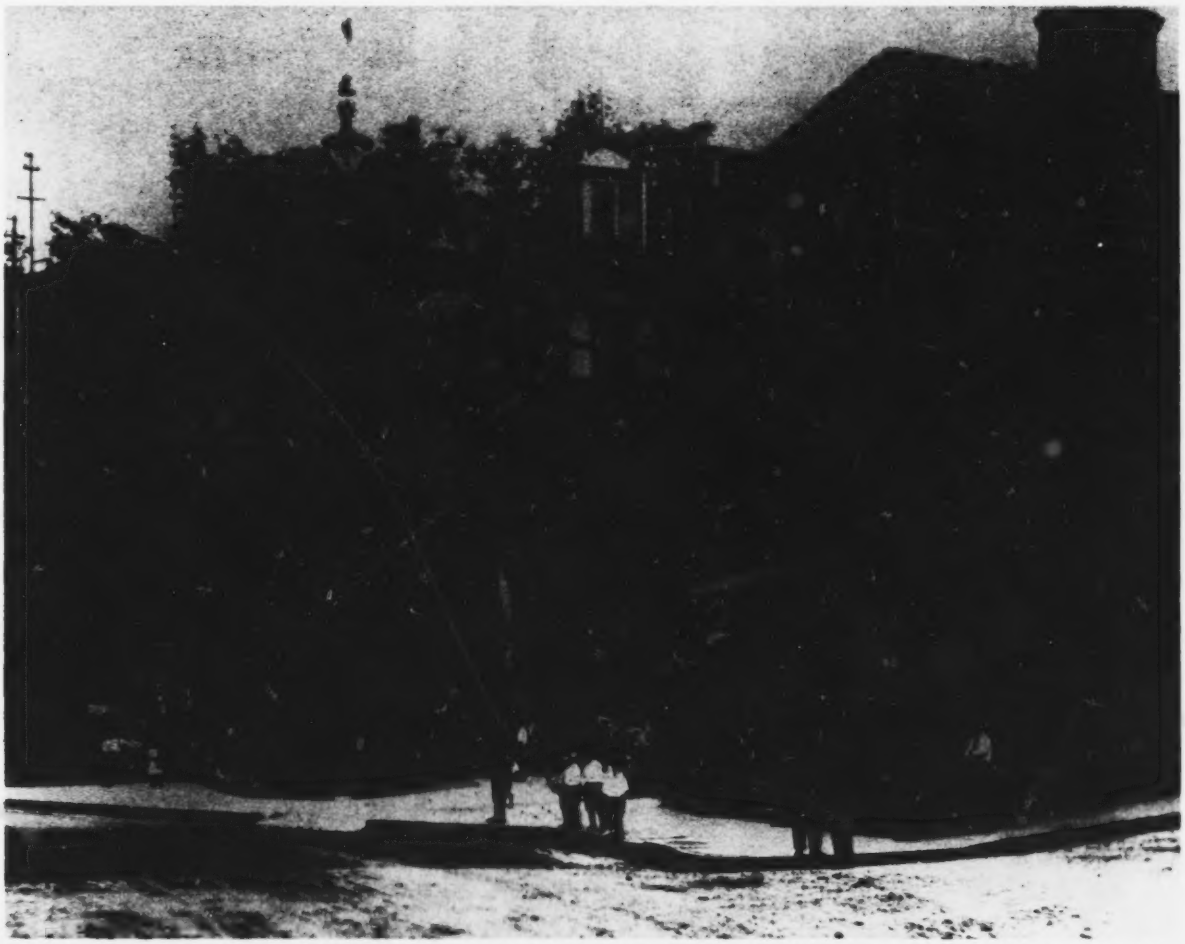
Availability of Materials

On a simpler level, the Germans in Minnesota employed the materials at hand with distinct skills. First they built out of logs, notching their corners in a saddle joint and chinking the cracks with plaster or mud in the manner they were used to from the construction of the *Fachwerk* house back in Germany.[21] Later they turned to more permanent substances, notably limestone wherever it was available in southern Minnesota. In the St. Cloud region, where granite outcroppings and field stones were everywhere, the German farmers employed these materials for the construction of houses, just as South Germans had done customarily in the mountainous regions for thousands of years. The Sauk River Valley is replete with farmhouses and barn foundations formed from seam-faced granite.[22] In the strong German colony in St. Paul there are numerous examples to illustrate the affection of the Germans for masonry construction. One is the Spangenberg house in the St. Paul Highland Park district (375 Mount Curve Avenue); several stand in Cottage Grove; and a number of them in Stillwater, Hastings, and Winona typify the pleasure of the German in a two-or-more-story limestone house.

No doubt the most commonly used material in home construction among the Germans in Minnesota was the clay brick. Investigations into the specific characteristics of German brickmakers and layers in Minnesota are not yet conclusive. On the surface, though, it appears that the ordinary German was content to use what was readily available. A drive through the countryside southwest of the Twin Cities reveals at once the preference of the German settlers for Chaska brick, a cream-colored product of local clay which farmers worked into their houses. Whether the bricks were red and rather crudely laid, as in the St. Cloud area (e.g. in the quadrangle at Collegeville), or whether red and ornately laid as in many of the structures of New Ulm, the use of bricks in construction was rarely uniquely German. Sometimes the German bricklayer abstracted some of the Victorian wood ornamentation common to American styles by implementing a geometric brickwork, three-dimensional relief patterns, or abstract forms or even contrasting colors. But this was rare and not always ascribable to German craftsmen.

The cultural baggage of the Germans in Minnesota can be detected by the close observer in a great many other dimensions, most of which are crying for detailed investigation and careful analysis to determine the exact extent of their ethnic authenticity. In the more obvious cases, where the Amish-speaking Pennsylvania Dutch have settled in southern Minnesota (near Harmony and northward to St. Charles), the horsedrawn vehicles, machines, and non-electrical farmsteads illustrate the lack of conformity. But the influence of ethnic cultural baggage may be much more subtle than the horse and buggy. Joseph P. Sullivan concluded that the principal feature which distinguished Irish farmsteads in southern Minnesota from those of their Bohemian neighbors was the color green, whether on the roofs of houses and barns or on the trim around the windows and doors of the houses. The self-assured Bohemian who bought a farm from an Irishman in the overlap zones of the two groups immediately changed the motif from green to blue.[23]

Lake Auburn Moravian Church near Victoria.



Wolf's Brewery, Stillwater, decorated with flags for an unknown celebration. The Lowell Park Band is posed in front of the brewery. 1912.

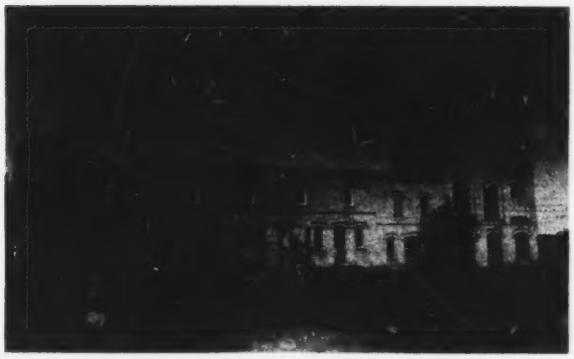
Colors are equally important to the German owner of a farmstead, although they are not necessarily the red, black, and gold hues of the flag.

One outbuilding which almost universally stood on the German farmstead in Minnesota was the smokehouse for curing hams, bacon, and sausage. I am currently investigating this "architectural" phenomenon, and while I do not have conclusive proof that the presence of the smokehouse definitively reaches back to a German owner in the farm's legal abstract, the omnipresence of that outstructure in the well-defined German rural settlement areas does point to this verdict. Such buildings are frequently made of limestone but fieldstone and brick smokehouses were also common, and later models were frequently constructed of red, hollow tile. Certainly the availability of materials in a given locality determined what was actually used. Log smokehouses were used readily in the earlier days of German settlement, according to local informants, but I have not seen any survivors in Minnesota. According to Charles Van Ravenswaay, the log smokehouse was not uncommon within the German settlement areas of Missouri.[24]

A few of the Mennonite German-speaking settlers in the Mountain Lake area of Minnesota resorted to their traditional style by constructing the barn and the house into one continuous building, and their local Heritage society under the leadership of Henry Kliewer has moved one of these into an open-air museum at the edge of Mountain Lake. In these structures not only could one pass directly from the house into the barn, but warmth was derived from a central heating system — a masonry brick cookstove, oven, and space heater — which extended as part of the central supporting wall back through the house from the kitchen, into the living room and bedrooms. Informants report that many of the Mountain Lake Mennonite houses exhibited a trait, learned in South Russia, of constructing houses and/or the central stove system from earthen bricks baked in the sun at the building site.[25] In some instances such central stoves provided space in the upper chimney for suspending poles into the central stack, through an aperture in the attic of the house, for smoking meat.

Buildings on German-American Farms

Not enough research is available to report definitively about German barns in Minnesota.[26] One problem in analyzing Minnesota barns and their ethnic origins is the part played by master carpenters and stone masons who apparently moved like medieval craftsmen from area to area wherever their services were needed. The techniques they brought into a community were often supplemented from one nationality group to another, and thereby the *fusion* of



Schroeder's Brewery, Otter Tail County.

Germania Brewery, Western Ave. and Kegans Lake, Minneapolis, 1888-89.

Brewery and Residence of Henry Schuster, Rochester.

The Banholzer Brewery, St. Paul, 1936.

Banholzer Family and Employees, St. Paul, 1889.

varying methods of construction readily degenerated into a *confusion* of styles. In the open-air museum at Old World Wisconsin, Richard Perrin and other cultural historians have assembled beautiful examples of *Fachwerkbau* from rural German communities in Wisconsin. They have also erected octagonal barns from Ozaukee County, claiming them to be typical German barns. The problem is that few people have seen anything like these octagonal barns in Germany, but we readily concede that all of them were erected by the German-born master carptenter, William Clausing. It is difficult to delineate what exactly is German and what is turn-of-the-century American about his octagonal barns.[27] Round and octagonal barns were once common in the Winona area of Minnesota, and they were scattered throughout the rest of the south and southeastern parts of the state. Although quite common in the German settlements in Wisconsin, the Pennsylvania Dutch barn — with its characteristic overhang of the haymow across the masonry foundation — is not at all frequent in the German rural areas of Minnesota. Barns with bays on both sides and a threshing floor in the middle were constructed virtually everywhere during the 1850-1870 period in southern Minnesota, and an excellent example can be seen at the Minnesota River Valley Restoration Project in Shakopee. This barn is identified as German, and indeed it originated on the Berger farm, which was German. But the style of the barn itself was repeated and can still be found more frequently in the Bohemian settlements of Minnesota than in the German areas, and it appears that the style may be Yankee in origin.[28]

In dealing with the material culture of an ethnic group, it is well to note that sometimes one of them zeroed in on a specific crop or special breeds of animals, often in contrast to what would typify them as coming from their country of origin. Karl B. Raitz and Cotton Mather[29] have shown that Norwegians, for example, were engaged exclusively in the growing of tobacco in the western Wisconsin communities of Westby and Viroqua, whereas the Germans in America raised tobacco intensively in a district north of Dayton, Ohio. We know that the Swiss around New Glarus, Wisconsin, have long been famous for their Swiss cheese, but the Brown Swiss breed of cattle has generally been sacrificed in favor of the Holstein. In New Berne, Minnesota, there were once cheese factories; but today, for their annual festival, they import cheese from Wisconsin, though they yodel and folk dance with the best of Swiss Americans. Today dairying is strong in all the German districts of Minnesota and Wisconsin, but in both states, when the Germans were pouring into the rural areas, the primary agricultural product was wheat.[30] The switch to dairying was necessitated by two factors: depletion of the soils through failure to rotate crops, which brought on erosion, and the uncontrolled attack on wheat by the chinch bug. Dairying required much larger barns than were needed for the cash crop of wheat, and thus the big Minnesota dairy barns in the German settlements were more the response to an American need than the manifestation of an innate bit of cultural baggage.

Agricultural villages, likewise, were determined in Minnesota by the existing system of the National Survey.[31] The survey was a powerful determinant in the post-Jeffersonian period, which compelled farmers to opt for the isolated farmstead in the midst of the family farmer's fields instead of following the traditional German system, in which all of the farmsteads are clustered in the center of the village lands.[32] Agricultural villages took hold in New England,[33] in Mormon areas, in the Spanish-American southwest and among the first settlements of the Germans from Russia in the Dakotas and Kansas. Only a few communal-religious groups, like the Amana Colonies of Iowa, were successful in establishing such villages in the Midwest. In contrast, nucleated agricultural villages are the rule in most parts of the world, the dispersed farmsteads of America being the exception, which the survey perpetuated.

As far as can be determined, the only giant Dutch-type windmills in Minnesota were those built and used by German immigrants. As has been well established, these big Dutch windmills were prevalent in Europe and only in a fairly thin belt running on the Continent from Holland eastward through northern Germany

The Berger farm at the Minnesota Valley Restoration Project.
From left to right - small barn (cattle), house, double bay horse barn, granary, chicken house.

Ferdinand G. Dobmeyer's Mill (lumber), Millersville Township, Douglas County. Herr Dobmeyer was born in Stearns County in 1871; his parents were natives of Bavaria. His father built the mill in 1873.

and into Poland. In the United States the giant "Dutchmen" were never employed extensively for the simple reason that, in the technological stage of their employment, they had already been surpassed by the steam engine.[34] The best preserved Dutch windmill in North America is at Steinbach, near Winnipeg in Canada. The once grand Seppman Mill near Mankato has been partially restored by the Minnesota Historical Society.[35] Other such giants once stood near New Ulm, near Minnesota Lake, in the small town of Potsdam, south of Lakeville in Eureka township, and at Claremont. Of couse all of the German farmers in Minnesota were quick to adopt the American windmill to raise water and power small devices on the American farm. But the American windmill, too, slowed to a haunting creak before fading from the horizon when the high-tension powerline towers superceded it as the rural skyscraper.

Progress has been the death of most ethnic traditions in America. Progress means that new objects and ways of doing things are invented and introduced to the standard way of life at various times following settlement in the New World, and many of these objects cannot acquire any relationship whatsoever to the traditions of the country of origin. Some such inventions are doubly destructive to the ethnic style because they force homogenization of the peoples. The worst offender in this category is surely the automobile. But the consolidated school district, while more subtle in its homogenization process, may well be the most thorough-going in its effect. Parallel to the public school is the modernization and reorganization of religious districts, synods, and parishes. At one time many religious groups in Minnesota were structured along ethnic lines. Today the ethnic dimension on Sundays is fading if not entirely forgotten.

In Minnesota the German heritage is alive, but slumbering. The language has been ailing[36] for a long time, but perhaps the architectural styles and outward manifestations of the German cultural baggage which have been captured in wood and stone will be with us for another century.

LaVern J. Rippley, professor of German at St. Olaf College, Northfield, is a native of Wisconsin, where his German ancestors from Baden (named Rieple) settled in 1863. He took an M.A. from Kent State and a Ph.D. from Ohio State; he taught two years in high school and three years at Ohio Wesleyan before coming to St. Olaf as chairman of the German Department in 1967. Besides more than a hundred articles and reviews, Rippley has published five books — as author or translator and editor: *The Columbus Germans* (Ohio: Mannerchor, 1968); *Of German Ways* (Minneapolis: Dillon, 1970) now available also in paperback from Harper & Row; *Excursion Through America* by Nicolaus Mohr (Chicago: R. R. Donnelly, 1973); (with Armand Bauer) *Russian-German Settlements in the United States* by Richard Sallet (Fargo: Institute for Regional Studies, 1974); and *The German-Americans* (Boston: Twayne, 1976). In the past fifteen years, Rippley has made seventeen visits to German-speaking countries, including a year in Munich as a Fulbright Fellow and a sabbatical year (1974) in Austria.

Notes

[1]Hildegard Binder Johnson, "Factors Influencing the Distribution of the German Pioneer Population in Minnesota," *Agricultural History*, 19 (January, 1945), 39-57, especially 39.

[2]Marcus L. Hansen, "The History of American Immigration as a Field for Research," *American Historical Review*, 32 (1927), p. 503, argues that "In the history of immigration no subject is more important than that of the process of distribution. Not only did it determine the permanent location of races, but its methods have been agents of Americanization and its phases have marked eras in national development."

[3]See especially Matti Kaups, "Finnish Place Names in Minnesota: A Study in Cultural Transfer," *The Geographical Review*, 57 (1956), 377-97. See also Cotton Mather and Matti Kaups, "The Finnish *riihi* in Minnesota," *Journal of the Minnesota Academy of Science*, 38 (1972), 66-71.

[4]See Joseph Schafer, "The Yankee and the Teuton in Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 6 (1922), 125-45, 261-79, 386-402; and 7 (1923), 3-19, 148-71.

[5]Charles E. Dingman, "Land Alienation in Houston County, Minnesota: Preferences in Land Selection," *The Geographical Bulletin*, 4 (1972), 45-49.

[6]I have dealt with these concentrations at some length in my article "Notes about the German Press in the Minnesota River Valley," *The Report: Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland*, 35 (1972), 37-45. The article was reprinted recently in *Currents*, 2 (Spring, 1979), 5-12.

[7]See, in general, Hildegard Binder Johnson, "The Distribution of German Pioneer Population in Minnesota," *Rural Sociology*, 6 (March, 1941), 16-34.

[8]See my discussion in *Report*, 35, and note the statistics of German publications in Karl J. A. Arndt and Mary E. Olson, *German-American Newspapers and Periodicals 1732-1955* (Heidelberg: Quelle and Meyer, 1961), pp. 220-237.

[9]See La Vern J. Rippley, "A History of the Dakota Freie Presse," *Heritage Review*, 7 (December, 1973), 7-17.

[10]The Minnesota Historical Society photography section has many pictures of this building.

[11]See the advertisements reproduced in the supplement to the *Winona Sunday News*, April 23, 1972. See also "Winona's Historic Bank — An Architectural Heritage Preserved," in the *Minneapolis Tribune Sunday Picture Magazine*, May 28, 1972.

[12]Oscar H. Rudnick, *Das Deutschtum St. Pauls im Wort und Bild* (St. Paul: n.p., 1924).

[13]Carl Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution: The German Forty-Eighters in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952), p. 147.

[14]Quoted in Noel Iverson, *Germania, U.S.A.: Social Change in New Ulm, Minnesota* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966), pp. 53-54.

[15]Iverson, p. 55. See also Louis A. Fritsche, *History of Brown County, Minnesota* (Indianapolis: B. F. Bowen, 1916), I & II (reprinted in 1976 at Marceline, Missouri: Wadsworth). See also Edward D. Neill, *History of the Minnesota Valley* (Minneapolis: North Star Publishing Co., 1882).

[16]Evan Jones, *The Minnesota: Forgotten River* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1962), p. 156.

[17]Frederick R. Steinhauser, Professor of Social and Behavioral Science in the General College at the University of Minnesota, has documented from the 1860 Census all the members of the original Chicago Land Group and the Cincinnati Turner Society, as well as the individuals who first held membership in the New Ulm Turner Society. The document is available from Steinhauser in off-set print.

[18]These notions were first suggested by Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America* (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1954), originally published by Prentice-Hall, 1939, p. 204.

[19]La Vern J. Rippley, "Alexander Berghold, Pioneer Priest and Prairie Poet," *The Report: A Journal of German-American History, Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland*, 35 (1978), 43-56 (reprinted, slightly expanded, in *Currents*, 2 (Fall, 1979).

[20]See the lengthy article "Caledonia Split over Closing of its Old Irish Catholic Church," *Minneapolis Tribune*, June 11, 1979.

[21]La Vern J. Rippley, "America's Love Affair with the Log Cabin," four-part series which appeared in the *Golden Nugget*, an insert in southern Minnesota newspapers, among them the *Northfield News*, between March 2, 1977 and March 23, 1977.

[22]See in this regard Roger Kennedy, *Minnesota Houses: An Architectural and Historical View* (Minneapolis: Dillon, 1967), p. 62.

[23]See John Fraser Hart, *The Look of the Land* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1957), p. 20, footnote 7.

[24]Charles Van Ravenswaay, *The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1977), pp. 120, 122, and 125.

[25]For many photographs and an essay on this style of architecture, see Richard Sallet, *Russian-German Settlements in the United States* (Fargo: North Dakota State University Press, 1974).

[26]I have written a twelve-part series about this subject in the *Golden Nugget (Northfield News)* between the dates of May 18, 1977, and August 3, 1977.

[27]See Richard W. E. Perrin, *Historic Wisconsin Buildings: A Survey of Pioneer Architecture, 1835-1870* (Milwaukee Public Museum Publications in History, No. 4), and "Fackwerkbau Houses in Wisconsin," *Society of Architectural History Journal*, 18 (March, 1959), 29-33. See also Bertha Kitchell Whyte, "Octagonal Houses and Barns in Wisconsin," in *Wisconsin Heritage* (Boston: Charles T. Branford, 1954), pp. 104-124.

[28]See Henry Glassie, *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968); and Fred Kniffen, "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 55 (December, 1965), 549-577. See also R. W. Brunskill, *Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971). Readers should also consult Reichard Weiss, *Häuser und Landschaften der Schweiz* (Erlenbach-Zürich: Eugen Rentsch Verlag, 1959), for its splendid illustrations.

[29]Karl B. Raits and Cotton Mather, "Norwegians and Tobacco in Western Wisconsin," *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, 61 (1971), 684-696.

[30]Hildegard Binder Johnson, "King Wheat in Southeastern Minnesota: A Case Study of Pioneer Agriculture," *Annals, Association of American Geographers*, 47 (1957), 350-362.

[31]For an excellent discussion of the paramount influence exercised on the patterns of settlement in Minnesota and throughout America by the Survey, see Hildegard Binder Johnson, *Order Upon the Land* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976).

[32]One of the best discussions of this topic is by Robert E. Dickinson, "Rural Settlements in the German Lands," *Annals of the Assocation of American Geographers*, 39 (December, 1949), 239-263. See also Walter Christaller, "Die Landliche Siedlungsweise im Deutschen Reich und ihre Beziehungen zur Gemeinde-organization," *Einzelschriften des Kommunalwissenschaftlichen Instituts an der Universität Berlin* (1937).

[33]See Thomas C. Hubka, "The Connected Farm Buildings of Northern New England," *Historical New Hampshire*, 32 (1977), 87-115; and Wilbur Zelinsky, "The New England Connecting Barn," *Geographical Review*, 48 (October, 1958), 540-553.

[34]La Vern J. Rippley, "Windmills: Getting Their Second Wind?" *Passages*, 6 (May, 1975), 20-24. See also A. Clyde Eide, "Free as the Wind," *Nebraska History*, 51 (1970), 25-47.

[35]See the photograph in David Gebhard and Tom Martinson, *A Guide to the Architecture of Minnesota* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), p. 240.

[36]La Vern J. Rippley, "Deutsche Sprache in Minnesota," *Deutsch als Muttersprache in den Vereinigten Staaten*, Teil 1: *Der Mittelwesten* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1978), 77-89.

The Minnesota Valley Restoration Project

by Margaret MacFarlane

The Minnesota Valley Restoration is an outdoor, living museum that attempts to give an authentic reflection of the ethnic specifics of the broad geographic areas of the lower Minnesota River Valley during its critical development period, 1840-1890. In collecting what remains of the physical evidence of these years, we have crossed back and forth over the material of this discussion in perhaps the most fascinating way — that is, through individuals. Because of this we have collected only bits and pieces of information, to be sure, but when enough accumulates it echoes the factual knowledge of the libraries.

In the assemblage that makes up the chronological overview of the Minnesota Valley Restoration, the Germans are strongly represented. They were inescapable. Of the twenty-two houses representing twenty-two families, four were of German immigrants, five were of second generation Germans, and three were of marriages that crossed German nationality lines. The project set no quotas in its search for physical evidence of the period. The numbers were there, strongly represented in both the structures we selected and those we had to leave behind.

The German families represented in the Minnesota Valley Restoration included Leo Berger, a farmer-immigrant from Baden-Baden in 1848; Arnold Grafenstadt, immigrant from Germany in 1852; August Able, tailor and immigrant from Germany in 1868; and Francis Xavier Hirscher, carpenter and undertaker who immigrated from Germany in 1849.

The use of brick had no geographic barriers and was just as common in the country as in the towns. The small, red brick school building on the project site came from First Street in Shakopee and was a German-language Lutheran school. Of the six elementary schools in Shakopee, two were taught in the German language. Two other structures on the site are of brick: one a house built by an Irishman and added onto by a German, the other a monastery from Marystown, which was a predominantly German-Irish Catholic area south of Shakopee.

The Grafenstadt house at the Minnesota Valley Restoration Project (MVRP) was one of the first balloon frame houses in the rural Shakopee area. Built about the early 1860s, it exemplifies the typical American simple house with Greek revival overtones.

The yellow brick of Chaska is also represented in the reconstruction of the *Chaska Herald* newspaper building, since the MVRP was given the 1873 Cranston newspaper press from the original structure. Chaska brick has been gathered from salvage operations for this purpose. The Belle Plaine old City Hall and Fire Station was dismantled by the project for the salvage rights to the brick.

There are many examples of furniture and church altar work done by the Hirscher family of cabinetmakers — still in the area. St. Mark's Church in Shakopee is particularly beautiful because of the ornate altars made by these artistic craftsmen. The MVRP will have a reconstruction of the Hirscher shop because of the exceptional quality of their work. Examples of Hirscher furniture are hard to come by because they are treasured by the people who possess them.

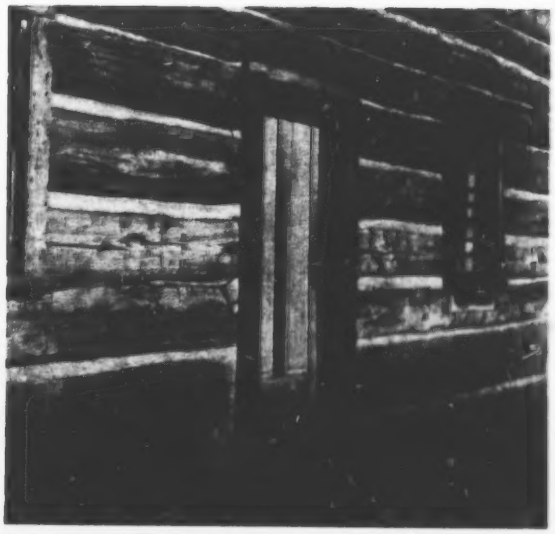
A mixture of methods and styles was also encountered in gathering the material for this project as a whole. The Berger family still has a few pieces of the original household goods, including an ornate pipe, lovely picture frames, a gun, the broad ax that was used on all the structures, some fine glassware, the immigrant chest, and odds and ends of kitchen gear. Two chairs from the original house (country Windsors) could have come from any frontier home. The pipe speaks, if not of a time and place, at least of personal taste. The kitchen tools are utilitarian and reflect the store in Henderson that was already there when the Bergers arrived in 1854.

The Berger farm was originally in Jessenland Township in Sibley County; it consisted of 80 beautiful and fertile upland acres back from the river that brought Berger there, but it was even then on an established road. Of the ten Berger children, seven lived to adulthood, and all bought acreage in the immediate vicinity. A reunion held for the Berger relations when their farm structures were moved to the MVRP site turned into a family group of well over one hundred and twenty people.

The Berger Farm Buildings

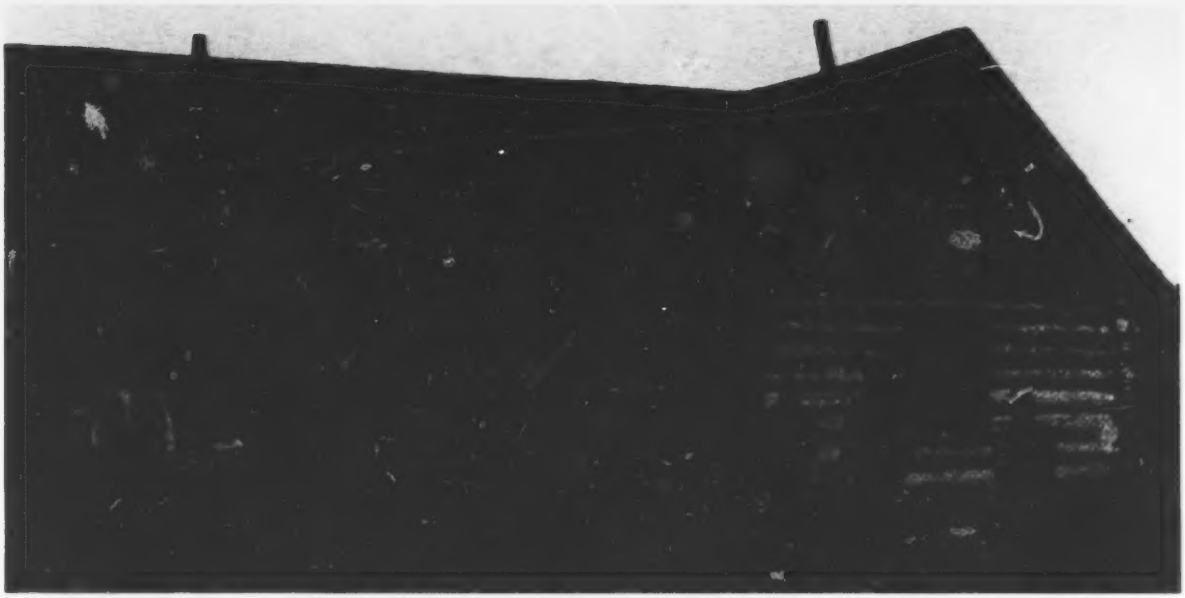
The prime material evidence of the Berger family's life consists of their house and farm buildings. Their oral tradition tells us that a brother of Leo Berger did all the ax work in preparing the timbers for these buildings, and the rest of the men assembled them. The double-bay barn with its threshing floor is not typical of the immediate area. Dr. Rippley feels that barns like this may show Yankee or Bohemian influence. We feel sure Berger himself — with close relatives, brothers and sons — built this one; but what he may have absorbed of other building ways during his six years in America before he arrived in Jessenland in 1854 is conjecture at this point. The treatment of the timbers is identical in the house and other outbuildings. The Big Woods provided the timbers needed. One relative at the Berger reunion had a son in service stationed in

View of the house on the Berger farm.



Entrance to the house on the Berger farm.

View of the double bay barn and house on the Berger farm.



Old Home of Ernest Pinske, Wild Rice Township, Norman County. Herr Pinske was born in 1855 and emigrated first to Red Wing at the age of 18 and then to Norman County. In 1917 the Pinske farm had the best field of rye grown in Minnesota. (Note: See photo on page 70).

Germany, and, as she intended to visit him, promised to look at barns in their native area. She reported similarities but did not document them with photos. A German immigrant who arrived in the 1960s and did volunteer work on the project reported that many barns of this type exist in the Baden area.

The original Berger farmstead had a log smokehouse. It was missing when we acquired the other buildings, but we were able to obtain one from the area that is very nearly identical in the log treatment. A short log structure for pigs was also part of the original set of buildings.

The Berger log buildings were covered and added onto early in their existence, and this largely accounts for the excellent conditions they are in today. The structures are all similar in plan. The corners were supported by huge buried stones. The area between was filled in with stone but not as a bearing surface. A small basement area was added later, with good masonry walls. The four corners carried the notched timbered walls that had their strength built into the interlocking notch. The two top timbers were also secured with a huge peg, approximately two inches in diameter, going through the corner joint. The chinking in the Berger buildings was a cement-like mix of lime and sand. Many timbered houses in the area were chinked this way if the builder could affort it. There is another timbered house at the MVRP that has its original chinking between the timbers, and it is a manure, clay, straw mix. One Berger relative, also an immigrant, was a farmer-stonemason by self-description.

The floor was not attached to the walls, but floated within. This has been true of all of the timbered houses we have moved to the MVRP. If there is a partition in the room, as there is in the Berger house, careful removal techniques are required. The partition in the Berger house was made of wide, full one-inch boards held by a small baseboard at the floor and nailed into one of the ceiling beams above. The boards were beautifully hand-planed, and one must look at them from the side to be sure. The craftsmanship required for this is still understood today, whereas we might miss the skill necessary in the ax work that created the even quality of the hewn timbers. Art Berger wonders if his ancestor Leo had been a carpenter as well as a farmer (in Germany and later in Minnesota), because of the skills taught and handed down through the Berger men. Also, they seemed to do their own building without aid beyond the large relationship.

The Berger house had six-over-six windows with glass. The joints were pegged with small wooden pegs. There was no other window hardware except a hold in the sash to receive a wooden peg, which held the window open about eight to ten inches. The windows and the simple board trim were painted a pale green, as was the partition wall. The walls were done with whitewash, with the traditional addition of bluing to give color. In the Berger house the resulting blue was quite subdued and completely covered the ceiling and beams.

When the MVRP received the house, it had been firred out, lathed and plastered. Newspapers between the firring strips provided insulation. An article, still fully readable, proclaimed a day of mourning for Lincoln — so we know the plain, whitewashed wall served the family for a period of some ten years. The newspaper was also in English, but we could not determine its banner.

A single chimney serves the house and is positioned on top of a small chimney cupboard, about two feet square. The original stove was a castiron box stove that was finally thrown into a ravine. Only one panel of it was found when the MVRP searched the ravine. The second stove was a small cookstove. The

New Home of Ernest Pinske

MVRP furnished a similar box stove with a sandbox protection area beneath in its presentation of the Berger house.

The roof rafters of the large barn are still round from the trees they came from, with some flattening on the side which received the roof boards. The house, however, has sawn rafters. Most probably the barn came first. Neill mentions William Berger, son of Leo, stating that their first family house was a rude cabin fourteen by sixteen feet. The rest of the Bergers who were interviewed confirmed this. We believe we have the second dwelling and that the first became an outbuilding in the complex of timbered structures forming the farmstead. The granary has a six-over-six window area, unusual for a granary, that suggests a former use of another type. This is a conjecture but fits the use pattern. The granary may have served as a first house for a married child until other structures were built, because its condition is excellent and the haste associated with a first shelter is not indicated.

The second floor of the house is a loft-like half-story, with timbered walls about three feet high before the slant of the roof begins. There are rafter ties across the expanse of the room that one must duck to avoid. Failure to remember them makes for a good crack on the head or shoulder. Regardless of the inconvenience, the upstairs served as a bedroom for children and for storage space. A Berger relative stated that Great-Grandma Berger did her spinning upstairs. Family members recalled the regular thumping of her wheel.

Speculation about the Family

The MVRP interviewed the Berger relatives extensively to obtain as much of their personal history as possible. Certain facts could be established with a reasonable degree of certainty. The Bergers were not poor: they paid for their passage, and upon arrival in Minnesota bought their first acreage. As a family they added acreage for each child, each paying proportionately for his or her share. One son paid more because his land had seven acres already cleared when it was purchased.

The Bergers were reasonably well-educated. All, even the girls, could read and write, and the family had a subscription to the *Cincinnati Democrat* for many years to keep in touch with the German people they had lived with upon arrival in the U.S.

There is no recollection of German reading material in the home beyond the *Cincinnati Democrat*. All of Leo Berger's original family spoke German in the home, but the language died out quickly among the next generations. The Bergers had settled down in a predominantly Irish parish, and there were several French families there also. Leo deviates from the norm, however, in that no pronounced effort was made to keep the language in use. Only a few phrases are understood by the youngest Bergers today.

Our information on the Leo Berger family was gathered by Ginger Timmons through a combination of interviews with fourth generation Berger descendants, plus some primary materials we were able to find. There was remarkable agreement in most items and some interesting discrepancies. Some of the family give the German origin of the Leo Bergers as Baden-Baden and one gives it as Wiesbaden.

Just why Leo Berger chose to come to America is not certain. We do know the family was Catholic, not destitute, and fairly well-educated; that they had lost three children in Germany before coming; and that

Small barn on the Berger farm. (Michele Hutton and Laura MacFarlane in the foreground)

they immigrated with a brother of Leo's and three other families who had been close neighbors. They were hard-working, successful farmers who made the land produce well. Only one Berger held political position; William, son of Leo, served as a councilman. The first children intermarried with the families they immigrated with, and then the marriages crossed to the Irish and French who were also settled in the Jessenland area. Leo supported the Jessenland church that was predominantly an Irish parish. The Berger family was not musically inclined as far as their descendants know. Few have left the Catholic faith over four generations. There is evidence that they were modestly well off, but whether this was brought from Germany or gained here by frugality and hard work is not known. Berger immigrated in 1848, but whether he was a Forty-Eighter in the political sense or not is not clear.

The challenge of the MVRP is to make this farmstead and the other German homes reflect their true German characteristics, not created ones we might wish them to be. Enough evidence, carefully gathered and matched with established facts, should help us find this perspective. There is something positive and irrefutable about the everyday items that make up people's lives. We can only hope to get an accurate reflection when they are offered with established knowledge.

Margaret MacFarlane, director of the Minnesota Valley Restoration Project, Shakopee, Minnesota, was instrumental in moving and restoration of the Berger family farm in Sibley County, considered to be the best example of German immigrant craftsmanship in Minnesota. She has B.A. and M.A. degrees from Macalester College, St. Paul.

A Rejection of Traditional German Forms

by Thomas Harvey

Dr. Rippley's paper raises a number of interesting questions for the study of the material culture of Germans in Minnesota. Rippley is quite familiar with the Minnesota Germans and has presented some important information about the German populations and their artifacts. I have been in Minnesota less than two years. His paper has certainly increased my knowledge of the state's German heritage.

In preparing my response, it became evident that there is a lack of research on the artifacts of Germans, and of other groups, in the state. Useful studies are available from other areas of the country, and since my comments will be somewhat general, I think those studies apply. My interest in material culture is primarily focused on the landscape. I am a geographer by training, and my work in Minnesota with the State Historic Preservation Office is oriented toward buildings. My field observations in several western Minnesota counties reinforce my more general ideas on ethnic material culture. As a comparative perspective, I lived for a short time in a German-settled area of Texas.

Scholars have often studied ethnic material culture in two ways. One approach is the identification of cultural survivals in new settings. These studies have looked for pre-identified traits in a given area. For Germans in Minnesota, the identification of windmills can serve as an example. Studies in the same vein note artifacts that appear repeatedly in a given setting and then trace the origins of these artifacts. Observing a high correlation between brick construction and German populations might lead to research into the origins of brick construction techniques. Results from research might indicate German or non-German builders and construction methods.

A second general approach to material culture is to observe and study a number of kinds of artifacts for a defined group or area and to see what the complex of artifacts can tell us about their makers and users. We are interested in the German and German-American populations in Minnesota. If we look at the whole body of their material culture, what does the group of artifacts say about Germans in the state? Dr. Rippley has given us material to start with. He presents the material culture of different socio-economic German classes, discusses settlement patterns and architecture, and debunks some of the too-often accepted notions about the "Germanness" of certain artifacts. If we expand our research to include more than the total German population in Minnesota, we would find — though I am not saying that Dr. Rippley would agree — that the material culture of the Germans in Minnesota shows a rejection of "German" material culture. As the geographer Peirce Lewis has stated, "The man-made landscape provides strong evidence of the kind of people we are, and were, and are in the process of becoming."[1] When we interpret the artifacts of the German populations in the state, we see cultural convergence — assimilation — with Midwestern American life and values. If we are not predisposed to looking for distinctively German things, we will seldom see overwhelming evidence of German culture.

Let us look at settlement patterns of Germans in Minnesota — particularly the towns and buildings. Dr. Rippley mentioned the four major concentrations of German population along early waterways. There are several smaller concentrations farther west and out on the prairies. Few towns in Minnesota were platted by Germans, and of those that were I know of none that are not typically American in plan, including New Ulm. In their physical form, the German-settled towns are indistinguishable from neighboring settlements. The national survey grid is partly to blame, but the grid could be overcome. The absence of nucleated agricultural villages, for example, cannot be blamed on grid-plans, for the Mormons in Utah established such villages with rigid square grids. That the grid was not overcome in German-settled Minnesota says more about the mind-set of Germans in this state than about the inherent limits of the survey system.

The rejection of German culture is also seen in the architectural styles and building types found in German areas. There are few strikingly German structures in Minnesota. Several distinctive buildings are associated with the German population. Dr. Rippley mentions the breweries, including Schell's in New Ulm, but these are a few structures built by a handful of elite individuals. There are two areas of presumed traditional German construction that deserve more study — log buildings and masonry structures. It is generally accepted that the American log cabin is a merger of traditional British house plans with German construction techniques, originating around southeastern Pennsylvania and spreading through the South and Midwest. This is a German-influenced American building form that developed prior to settlement in Minnesota. A rigorous analysis of Minnesota's log buildings by type and construction techniques would tell us more about specifically Yankee, German, and Scandinavian patterns and influences. As an example, a study of North Dakota houses showed Germans to be the least likely group to build with logs.[2]

There may be a high correlation between brick and stone construction and German craftsmen. One cannot help but notice the number of brick houses in largely German-settled Carver and Stearns counties.

Yet even here we need detailed studies. I find Dr. Rippley's assertion that clay brick was the most commonly used material in house construction among the Germans hard to accept. I think if we were to look at houses throughout Minnesota we would see other results. My observations in German areas in southwest Minnesota and in Clay County show a preference for frame construction and standard American styles. This is not surprising. As Hildegard Johnson has said, "The Germans could not buck the influence of the Sears Roebuck catalog and the railroads."[3] Lyman Bridges, a building prefabricator based in Chicago, had a contract with the Northern Pacific Railroad to supply ready-made houses to settlers along the line as it built west in the early 1870s. Sears Roebuck continued to prefabricate both house parts and complete structures until the 1920s.

The rejection of traditional German forms resulted not only from available and more convenient alternatives. In a recent study of Texas-Germans, Lonn W. Taylor, Curator of History at the Dallas Historical Society, found a rejection of traditional house types and furniture styles that has parallels here in Minnesota. The sizable number of Germans who emigrated to Texas, not unlike those in Minnesota, came from diverse socio-economic and religious backgrounds over a period of several decades. Rather than any single German culture, the immigrants came from a number of cultures. We would naturally expect a wide range of artifact complexes from which the immigrant continued in a tradition or rejected traditional forms.

Taylor found that the houses built by Germans in the 1840s and early 1850s took one of two forms: the traditional southern Anglo-American log house or the "filled-frame" *Fachwerk* house from Europe. Anglo-Americans helped their German neighbors with many of the log structures. The *Fachwerk* houses required skilled carpenters, and there were many German-born carpenters in Taylor's study area. But by 1855 *Fachwerk* construction had completely disappeared from the area. Taylor found that those same German carpenters were building southern Greek Revival houses for their clients. He concludes that "the German immigrant population began demanding new forms in the 1850s, forms that were consistent with the cultural values of their new nation — or perhaps simply not consistent with the restraints and limitations of the Old World — and were expressive of the independence and prosperity of the Anglo-American landowner."[4] He found the same rejection of traditional, hand-crafted furniture in favor of mass-produced New York furniture, even when the imported furniture was more expensive than the Texas product. Taylor concludes: "The superficial 'Germanness' of the Texas-Germans is undeniable . . . . The rejection of these two very basic manifestations of folk culture by the Texas Germans show how fragile material folk culture is when removed from the context that created it and transported it across the Atlantic. It behooves all of us to consider this fragility well, and to look with skepticism on examples of ethnic 'folk survival' in America."[5]

His message is worth heeding. There is nothing wrong with the rejection of tradition. Further analysis of German material culture in Minnesota can answer some important questions. We know very little about the temporal framework of ethnic artifacts. When did traditional forms fade out? The multi-faceted aspects of group culture are largely unexplored in the state. What was the role of religion in cultural persistence? What do comparisons of German Catholic and German Lutheran artifacts tell us? What was the role of the railroad and mass-produced objects in the decline of traditional forms? From a geographical view, are there core and peripheral German settlements that differ in cultural persistence, perhaps a large population in Stearns County that could maintain traditions longer than a small group near Sabin in Clay County, more influenced by their neighbors? What is the relationship between the German elite — brewery owners, bankers, publishers — and the common man? Both classes have material culture worthy of investigation, but they require different types of questions.

I have concentrated on the more public facade of German-Minnesotans: their settlement patterns, landscapes, and buildings. There are the subtle customs of ethnic groups, such as the house trim color choices that Dr. Rippley mentioned. It is, perhaps, in the more private traditions — language, foodways, and social customs — that a German-American culture is vital and ongoing. There is much work to be done to understand the functional significance of these traditions. In addition to their own intrinsic worth as clues to cultural values, these more subtle and more private traditions provide a context for the architecture and public landscapes of German-Americans.

Thomas Harvey is a research associate with the Minnesota Historical Society and a graduate student in geography at the University of Minnesota. His work with the State Historic Preservation Office includes building surveys of the Red River Valley and Stearns and Washington counties. His current research interest is urban settlement patterns in Minnesota. Previous work has been on rural cultural landscapes. Mr. Harvey's interest in ethnic settlement and material culture stems from living for a year in a German and Czech area of Texas.

Notes

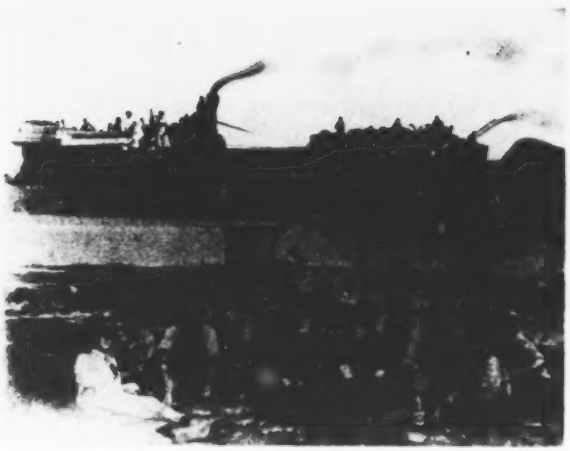
[1]Peirce F. Lewis, "Axioms for Reading the Landscape," in D. W. Meinig, ed., *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes* (New York: Oxford, 1979).

[2]John Hudson, "Frontier Housing in North Dakota," *North Dakota History*, 45 (Fall, 1975), 4-15.

[3]Hildegard Binder Johnson, personal comments, Sept. 29, 1979.

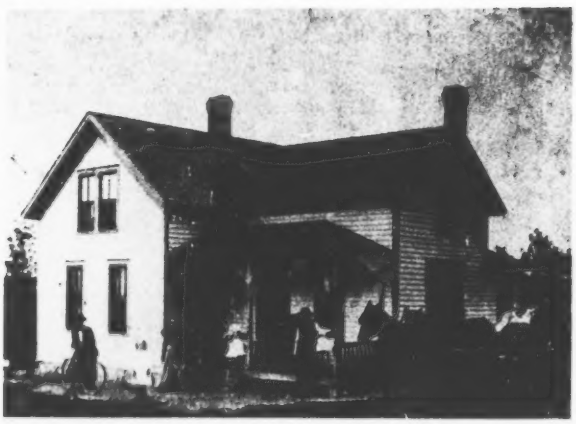
[4]Lonn W. Taylor, "*Fachwerk* and *Brettstuhl*. The Rejection of Traditional Folk Culture," paper read at the 1977 Winterthur Conference on American Folk Art, November 10-12, 1977, the Henry Francis Dupont Winterthur Museum.

[5]Taylor, Nov. 10-12, 1977.



Schmieding farm and German work crew on Schmieding farm near Marietta, ca. 1910.

Residence of George Stoppel, Rochester Township, Olmsted County. Herr Stoppel was born in Württemburg in 1813. He learned the coopers trade, emigrated in 1848, and in 1856 came to Olmsted County where he farmed.



Louis Hintz farm, 4 miles NE of Kiester, 1899. (Louis and Emma with children, left to right, Mata, Matilda, Manville and Erwin. Man with bicycle is Ben Waldo.)

Louis Hintz Farm, ca. 1908

Material Artifacts Reflect People's Lives

by Gary W. Stanton

Dr. Rippley's address challenges each of us to seek the necessary documentation for specific answers to his tantalizing beginnings. He draws examples from the broad social classes of the German-speaking population, examining the German influence in Minnesota's popular culture and stylistic architecture during the past hundred years, and then — turning to his own provocative research — provides a glimpse at several of the important vernacular structures built by Germans in Minnesota. His is the historian's approach, oriented toward documents and the influential citizenry. Banks, statues, and the architectural edifices designed and built by historically significant individuals demonstrate the prevailing use by historians of material artifacts as symbols of rural, urban, or ethnic identity. This is an entirely appropriate form of analysis which leads to important, thought-provoking conclusions about historical trends — such as the acceptance of the unifications of Germany under Bismarck by the American-German intelligentsia, as shown by their increasing taste for Gothic extravagance in architecture.

Material culture studies should illuminate trends and traditions of tangible cultural artifacts. The lone example of course speaks to those trends but is not by itself a demonstration of culture. This preoccupation is particularly important to folklorists who specialize in material culture, and sets them apart from historians, who might also utilize material artifacts in their research. For agricultural historians, knowledge of innovation, the cutting edge of progress, receives most attention. They wish to know when tractors began to be used in the Red River area, what kind of tractors they were, and who made them. The folklorist is, by way of contrast, interested in what the majority are doing, and even in what antecedents may be continued. He is therefore not so interested in the first tractor as he might be in the circumstances which allowed the last use of a horse-drawn plough or wagon.

By way of comparison I would suggest that a folklorist need know less than Dr. Rippley's introduction to New Ulm gave us about Father Friedrich Ludwig Jahn and the origins of Turnerism, and much more about the areas and social groups whence the early inhabitants of New Ulm came. Even more difficult is the task of identifying the material traditions of the rural farming families which form the larger and more diverse core of German immigrants.

Material culture is best understood and most useful when its study informs us about the people who made it and used it. Material artifacts reflect portions of peoples' lives which they are least likely to record, and give us our only glimpse of that majority of the population which never sees fit to script its life. The strongest repository of German-American traditions in Minnesota lies in what the majority of the immigrants and their offspring used and made, not in what the few produced. German newspapers are the products of the few in Minnesota, as in Indiana, Ohio, Missouri, Texas or elsewhere. One might well question the assessment that newspapers are one of the key pieces of material culture of the German settlers in Minnesota. I submit that the newspapers probably gave little indication of how German was spoken, nor did these presses treat truly local events and customs with nearly the dedication that the publishers reserved for state, national, and German events. These are not trivial subjects, but they are not the subjects illuminated by the study of material culture, nor are they the subjects of primary concern to many rural Minnesota residents of the nineteenth century.

Document vs. Artifact

The distinction I am seeking to draw here is between the document, which we must assess in terms of its impact, and the artifact, which we should interpret primarily in terms of its function. Dr. Rippley gives a good example of the limiting results of the National Survey, whose effect was to lay out most of the West in grid patterns. Yet even where land was laid out in this manner, as it was in Mormon Utah, it did not preclude nucleated farm villages, nor were isolated farms unknown to Minnesota's German immigrants, especially among those settlers from northern German provinces like Mecklenburg.

We must candidly identify our motives for research among the German-speaking population of Minnesota. Our goals may always seem contradictory: to celebrate the Germanness of this segment of Minnesota's population tempts us to scour the countryside seeking rare, isolated and unique artifacts, practices, and structures in order to focus on a version of German-American culture which is more what we wish it to be than what it is. Conversely, should we overemphasize the particularities of Minnesota's history of settlement, we may miss some of the larger aspects of the German-American experience throughout the Midwest. In addition, we must preserve in our minds the interactions of two generations within the German-speaking community, the immigrant and the ethnic.

The nineteenth century German experience in the Midwest, from roughly 1830 through 1875, was dominated by the immigrant, part of the great *Auswanderung* (movement of people out) of the

German provinces. Propelled from different areas of German-speaking Europe for economic and social reasons, the immigrants to the United States tended to move into lands which had only recently opened or were incompletely occupied. Hence, in the 1820s immigrants moved into Ohio; in the 1830s (especially after the panic of 1837), they increasingly moved into Indiana and Missouri; and the 40s and 50s saw them begin to make an impact in Texas and Minnesota. One important reason the Germans were less frequently in the vanguard of wilderness settlements revolves around their rather thoroughgoing argricultural tendencies, which could not compete with the mixed hunter-and-gatherer traditions of the American-born frontier families. The German farmer needed markets and routes of transportation to be effective, and he rarely moved into areas which could not be developed in these ways. This helps us to understand why rural German settlement tended to follow, not to precede, the urban element in Minnesota.[1]

The immigrants were the most frequent creators of architecture and artifacts which can be conclusively termed German — and often even identified by province. They provided virtually all the *Fachwerkbau* in Indiana and Missouri, and, I would suspect, Wisconsin and Minnesota. My research in Indiana, Charles van Ravenswaay's in Missouri, and Hildegard Binder Johnson's articles on Minnesota German immigrants all suggest that a large number of immigrants were craftsmen: masons, blacksmiths, shoemakers, tinsmiths, wagonmakers and brewers are a few of the craftsmen most frequently mentioned in census reports. The provincial differences which a study of the writings on continental German material culture illustrates were little reflected in the material culture of the nineteenth century immigrants to the United States. Closer examination and comparison of the artifactual record must be made, even upon those forms which appear distinctly English, since similar popular styles — such as the rationalistic Georgian architecture of the late eighteenth century — made its impact felt both in England and on the continent. Unfortunately, many of the published material culture studies in Germany and elsewhere on the continent are descriptions of sixteenth and seventeenth century vernacular structures, which were not the popular rural styles in the nineteenth century, when most of the Midwest was settled.

More Fieldwork Needed

The need for continuing thoughtful fieldwork cannot be overstated. I dare say that no German-speaking area of the United States suffers from too much documentation and investigation. More frequently, embarassment stems from too many assumptions and too little investigation. Dr. Rippley's example of the premature claim of Germanness for a round barn at Wisconsin's outdoor museum bears this out, but any museum staff member could fill books with examples. The appellation "German" implies that the object has not only been produced by immigrants

Eilert Klinghagen and Family, Rheiderland Township, Chippewa County.

in the United States but that it also shows definite parallels with continental examples which have been identified. To demonstrate less than the definite parallel is merely to postulate a relationship based upon the country of origin of the maker. Terry Jordan, for example, found recently that the double-crib barn, which had been assumed to be Pennsylvania German, is not found in the areas of Germany from which the Pennsylvania Germans migrated in the eighteenth century, but is found further east, and is especially common in Austria and Switzerland.[2]

The material artifacts of the immigrant, however, form only a part of the material culture of the German-speaking areas of Minnesota. In response to local conditions (climate, soil, and plant cover), and the social environment of prior effective settlement and transportation, German immigrants and their offspring created an *ethnic* presence which altered the face of Minnesota. Immigrant culture is ephemeral, since it responds to the new situation with techniques and tools specific to another geosocial situation. The melding and accommodation of immigrant culture began before the immigrants reached Minnesota. At the ports and aboard the ships which brought them to the United States, they were suddenly treated as Germans, natives of a country which did not yet exist. Many marriages among the immigrants mixed regional characteristics even more. The ethnic German culture in Minnesota showed tremendous vitality because it was indigenous, not transplanted.

Some material cultural artifacts of the ethnic German presence we might look for include the synthesis of hog and dairy culture. We must examine the smokehouse not merely as a symbol of German culture, which its ubiquity across the southern United States suggests it is not, but look at the whole foodways question, including particular material artifacts and food preferences and techniques of preparation which may mark the German areas. Kraut cutters, grape vines and presses, smokehouses and sausage stuffers — along with the techniques to utilize these tools — help us understand what the American German community ate for everyday meals and for special occasions. Details of architectural construction — such as brick infill within the walls of frame buildings, and straw-and-mud wrapped slats as insultation in floors and ceilings — are small features which close examinaton may expose. Haying traditions, according to Ormond Loomis, vary among the ethnic groups in Minnesota, as do the form and size of the implements used to make the stacks and cut the hay.[3] Hop production and brewing require particular tools and techniques as well as special structures which are frequently found in German communities.

What is necessary is a framework within which one may evaluate what progress has been made towards a general ethnography of German-American material culture, and in what priority information should be collected.

Speaking generally about the nineteenth century, priority may be given to surveys which identify the presence of distinct material traditions and their distributions. Assuming that folklorists in Minnesota may already have passed this general collection stage, the necessity for analysis of artifactual and technical interactions is extremely pressing for those material traditions under pressure to change form before the beginning of the twentieth century. The interviewing of older residents who are still familiar with traditional curing and canning practices will help demonstrate the smokehouse's part in the articulated foodways system, and no amount of guessing about how a traditional barn was conceived is so important as the perspective of those who participated in its construction. Craftsmen, too, need to be identified, and craft traditions documented. In this line, the new craftsmen who articulated the older agricultural system with new technologies, the stationary engineers who ran the combines for threshing rigs, as well as the repair crafts of the blacksmith *cum* welder are all areas of research in which European material culture specialists have proved much more courageous than their American counterparts.

Finally, emphasis needs to be placed upon synthesis, interpretation, and publication. The material culture of Minnesota's German-Americans has a rich story to tell, perhaps a surprising one. Important as it is to recognize the artifactual traditions of German-Americans in Minnesota, it is equally important that this recognition be borne back to the people from whence it came — and to the more dispersed audience around the country and in Europe, who will profit from the increase in understanding.

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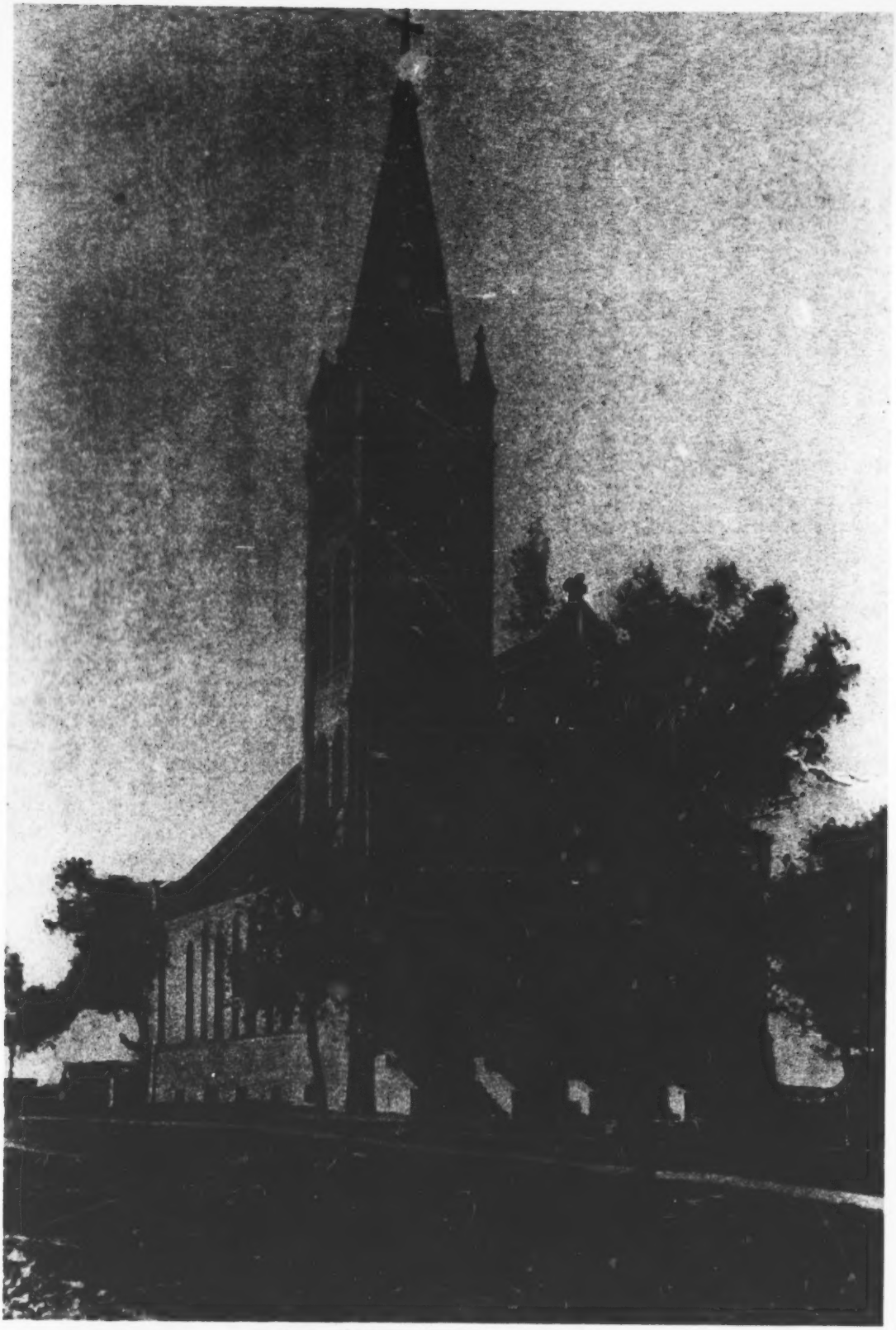
Notes

[1]Hildegard Binder Johnson, "Factors Influencing the Distribution of the German Pioneer Population in Minnesota," *Agricultural History* 19 (January, 1945): 44.

[2]Terry G. Jordan, "Alpine Antecedents of the American Double-Crib Log Barn," paper delivered to the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the Pioneer America Society, 4 November 1978, Pleasant Hill, Kentucky.

[3]Ormond H. Loomis, "Haying on the Range," paper written for the Center for the Study of Minnesota Folklife as part of the Iron Range Folklife Project, Summer 1978; being prepared for publication.



German Lutheran Church, Waconia, ca. 1915.

Part III.
Religious and Language Experiences of German-Americans in Minnesota

In these papers there is little mention of German language retention in Minnesota: the writers give almost exclusive attention to the religious experiences, which all of the papers are focused upon. Incidentally, of course, the German language gets some attention — though perhaps less in this division than in the other three, where "language" is not mentioned in the title.

Nearly all of the discussion is devoted to the two major German religions: Roman Catholic and Lutheran — with only bare recognition that there were also German Methodists, Baptists, Mennonites, as well as agnostics among the Forty-Eighters and Turners.

Because he is one of the acknowledged authorities on the subject, Father Colman Barry concentrates on the history of German-Catholics — and in the United States as a whole, not just in Minnesota. In the second and somewhat different address on the German-Catholics which he actually delivered in Moorhead and St. Paul, Father Barry focused more exactly on the Minnesota situation; but he obviously wished to show the larger scope of the struggle of German-American Catholics against an Irish and nativist domination of their church, and against the pressure to Americanize as quickly as possible. Their prime antagonist was Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, whose influence extended well beyond Minnesota. And their martyr, Peter Paul Cahensly, had no special connection with Minnesota's German-Americans. However, the bitterest and most inexcusable attack on Cahensly's efforts to help the immigrants came from a Minnesota senator — prompted by Archbishop Ireland. Father Barry recognizes that a hundred years later John Ireland will appear a jingoistic villain and Peter Paul Cahensly a neglected, idealistic hero. Nonetheless, Barry's treatment of the controversy is even-handed and deals justly with both men.

Alan Graebner, a historian whose own background is German Lutheran, thinks Father Barry concentrated too exclusively on the church hierarchy — which he concedes to be appropriate enough in recounting the nineteenth century story. The present impulse "to write history from the bottom up" will, Graebner suggests, focus more attention on the religious experience of women as well as men, on rural groups as well as urban, on provincial differences and parish particularities. By taking a broadly national view, Graebner argues that Father Barry slighted some of these aspects of the German-American religious experience in Minnesota — which was the focus of these conferences.

Diana Rankin points out that although there are many parallels between Catholic and Lutheran experiences in the New World, the German-Lutheran story is one of fragmentation instead of unity. Only recently have unification efforts made impressive progress in overcoming traditional and national differences. Missouri Synod Lutherans have rejected all mergers because they are "an ethnic group" that has retained "a consistent pattern of doctrinal and liturgical conservatism" which they brought with them from Saxony. Rankin argues that her discipline offers the best insight into such behavior: "The folklorist is interested in studying how groups attempt to live the present through their interpretation of the past."

Writing as an anthropologist, Timothy Kloberdanz points out the "overwhelming amount of cultural baggage" German immigrants brought with them into their Catholic worship in the United States. Perhaps because his own forefathers are fairly recent immigrants — the Germans-from-Russia who settled on the Great Plains — Kloberdanz (unlike Barry) does not think "the process of German-Catholic assimilation has ended." But Kloberdanz carries Barry's plea for "simple justice" to Peter Paul Cahensly somewhat farther, and is less willing to excuse Archbishop Ireland. Today, says Kloberdanz, "*Der kleine* Cahensly [he was a small man] dwarfs the sullen figure of the archbishop."

St. John's German Lutheran Church, Red Wing, ca. 1911.

Religious and Language Experiences of German-Catholic Americans

by Colman J. Barry

The Catholic Church in the United States has been in large measure an immigrant institution. The tide of immigration which brought millions of settlers to American shores created a phenomenon for this Church which was unparalleled in its history. Peoples of different races and nationalities, of distinct traditions and prejudices, came individually or in groups to establish new homes in a strange country. Among these varied nationalities the German people occupied a leading place. Immigrant German Catholics of the nineteenth century had a firm loyalty to their religion, sound organizational techniques, and a strong community pattern of worship, culture, and social action. From the time of their first Pennsylvania settlements in the mid-eighteenth century, German Catholic leaders had insisted on separate treatment and recognition as a minority group. Their demands in the following century for language rights, national parishes, and proportional representation in the hierarchy were, they maintained, defenses against attack by liberal German-Americans after 1848, as well as insurance that their religious faith would be preserved intact.

Simultaneously, leading Catholic churchmen and laymen, following the pioneer example of the first Catholic bishop of the United States, John Carroll of the colonial Maryland Carroll family, were working to instill devotion to American constitutional and political ideals among immigrant Catholics. Towards the end of the century differences over procedure and practice brought robust Americanizing and German elements into open conflict. German Catholic leaders and newspapers, supported by a large number of French, Polish, and Spanish representatives both in the United States and abroad, accused the Americanizers of striving to break down in a precipitate fashion all traditions and customs among Catholic immigrants. The Americanizers were also accused of causing a loss of religious faith and creating an undue attachment to American secular trends.

On their side the Americanizers, following especially the principles of Orestes Brownson and Isaac Hecker, were wedded to the vision of traditional Catholicism formed in an American democratic mold and based on a fusion of all national groups. They maintained that free political institutions can be secure only when the people are imbued with religious ideals, and that without the religious sanctions so indispensable to democracy the moral solidarity which makes democratic government possible would be broken. As Lacordaire, Schlegel, and Wiseman had done in Europe, they wanted to show the necessity of the Catholic religion to the modern world, and to impress on Catholics the necessity of their being in tune with the age. Foremost in the ranks of the Americanizers were James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore; Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, who had been called "the consecrated blizzard of the Northwest"; Bishop John J. Keane, rector of the Catholic University of America, and later archbishop of Dubuque; Bishop Denis J. O'Connell, rector of the American College in Rome; the Society of St. Paul the Apostle, or Paulists, which Isaac Hecker had founded; and the majority of the professors at the Catholic University of America in Washington.

This task of creating a religious and national unity among the Catholic immigrants reached a climax in the years between the War Between the States and World War I. German immigration to the United States was given a new impetus after 1865, and Catholics made up over thirty-five per cent of the German immigration of that period. They totaled around 700,000 in number during the period 1865 to 1900, and became the largest Catholic immigrant group arriving in the States. Between 1830-1870 Irish immigrants had come in largest numbers, up to fifty per cent above the German totals. But by 1865 the Germans had equalled the Irish influx, and from 1870 to 1890 the Germans led the field until Italian immigration began in earnest in the last decade of the century — and continued as the dominant immigrant movement for many years.

The rapid recovery of the North after 1865 and the advancement of world communication encouraged this movement of Germans to America. But conditions in Germany itself were perhaps an even more influential factor in this new and larger tide of immigration. The movement toward unification of the German peoples entailed in its wake political conditions which drove many citizens from their homeland. When heavier taxes and universal military service became the keynote of the new regime, especially after the rise to power of Count Otto von Bismarck; when the small landowners, farm hands, domestic hand workers and shop keepers found they had to abandon their traditional ways of life in a new military-industrial society — many saw their only hope of self-sufficiency and independence in emigration. But more important than these factors for the Catholics of Germany, perhaps, was the *Kulturkampf*. This religious persecution, which reached its peak in Falk's May Laws of 1873, practically annulled papal jurisdiction over German Catholics, abolished religious orders, and fined and deposed resisting German bishops. Although Catholics of the Rhine provinces, Bavaria, and Prussian Poland combined under the leadership of Ludwig Windthorst to wage the Center Party's campaign of "passive resistance," many priests and nuns were forced to flee. A large number of Germany's Catholic laity, wearied by the

St. Benedicts College, St. Joseph, ca. 1919.

campaign of vilification in newspapers and the constant pressure against their faith by their political masters, also turned their eyes toward foreign lands, especially the United States. In 1883 an agent of the St. Raphaelsverein in Hamburg asked a Catholic tenant-farmer from the Rhineland why he and his family were emigrating to America. He answered:

> My landlord gave us free lodging and 23-30 pfennig a day for wages. For this my whole family had to labor on Sundays as well as weekdays. We were obliged to do our own chores during free hours and on Sunday afternoons. If we asked permission to go to Church on Sunday, the man then abused us . . . every time and said: "You won't always have to be running after the priest if you find yourselves in the alms house." And so I am going to America. My friends write from there that they have such good conditions, and on Sundays as many as want to may go to Church. My children shall not imitate my slavery!'[1]

Germans who came after 1865 generally settled in the same regions as earlier German immigrants. Just as in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries German settlers had chosen the best farming land they could find, so in the last half of the nineteenth century they settled in agricultural and metropolitan areas which in time became known as "the German belt." This zone lay between the northern boundaries of Massachusetts and of Maryland, spread westward through the Ohio river basin to the Great Lakes, and then out into the prairie states beyond the Mississippi River. Germans settled in the Mohawk Valley, in eastern Pennsylvania, along the shores of the Ohio and Great Lakes, and down the Mississippi to New Orleans. But it was in the triangle embracing Cincinnati, Milwaukee, and St. Louis that the German population was especially dense.

Built Church and School First

Catholic Germans were concerned not only with their material well-being in the new world, but primarily with their spiritual life. This may be deduced from the fact that among their first interests was the erection of a church and a parish school. Fresh from Germany and feeling isolated because they knew no English, the German Catholics from the outset insisted that separate churches were an absolute necessity. They settled together in colonies whenever possible, often by their own choice, more often under the direction of a German priest or missionary. They wanted churches of their own in which their traditional religious observances and customs could be carried out, where they could hear sermons in their mother tongue, go to confession as they had learned to confess from early childhood, and take an active part in parish life through their beloved societies. They wanted the order and discipline of parish life as they had known it before coming to the United States. This German attachment to the customs of the fatherland was often misunderstood by their English-speaking neighbors. But the German immigrants felt that since their new coreligionists, the Irish and English Catholics, had no language problem of their own, they could not properly understand the close bond which existed in the German consciousness between the practice of their faith and these traditional customs which were deeply rooted in the centuries-old Catholic culture of the German fatherland.

During the nineteenth century the German Catholic leaders in the United States were insistent upon these special arrangements because they said immigrants were joining German *vereins* where they

felt more at home and where they could hear their mother tongue spoken. Editors of the German-American press, liberals and free-thinkers of the "48er" type, as well as the influential German *vereins* were conducting a concerted campaign to preserve German language and culture in the New World. German Catholics, both in Germany and the United States, were judged to be hyphenated Germans because of their allegiance to Rome; they realized they would be open to cynical attack if they should diminish their efforts to preserve *das Deutschtum* in the New World. Further, many of the common people among the German Catholics, timid and homesick in a new environment, would be easy prey to such charges.

For these reasons leading German Catholics spoke out for the preservation of German culture, customs, and language under the slogan of "Language Saves the Faith." Father Francis X. Weninger, a Jesuit missionary among German immigrants on the frontier, Bishop John Martin Henni of Milwaukee, the first German bishop in the United States, and Bishop John Nepomucene Neumann of Philadelphia all insisted that adoption of the English language and conformity to the American way of life would have to be, to say the least, a slow process for the German immigrant. There were some German Catholic voices raised in protest against this contention. For example, the Redemptorist missionary, Joseph Prost, said: "We are apostles to bring the people to Christ . . . not to maintain or implant a nationality or to spread a language . . . How laughable it is, therefore, for the German farmers and laborers to establish a *Deutschtum* in America." But such influences were slight compared to that of King Ludwig I of Bavaria, patron of the missions and benefactor of the German Catholics in the United States. Assuring the first group of German school sisters sent out to America through his munificence that "I shall not forget you," he forwarded 10,000 gulden to the Ursuline nuns in St. Louis for their new convent with specific advice: "I am very, very anxious that only Germans enter the convent as Sisters, and that the instruction should be only in German, both to be perpetual."[2]

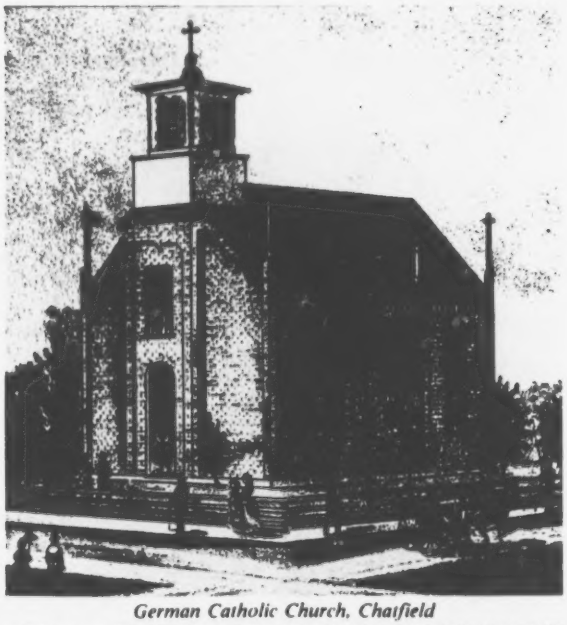
Irish Leadership Protested

The two well-known mission societies, the Leopoldinen Stiftung of Austria, and the Ludwig Missionsverein of Bavaria, contributed charitable and financial support to German Catholic missions in the United States. But many struggling German parishes did not feel they were receiving enough of these funds which the American bishops were distributing. The burden of erecting cathedrals, churches, rectories, and charitable institutions, as well as financing seminaries and schools, was a heavy one; and often the bishops used these funds, as well as those from the Lyons Society for the Propagation of the Faith, for non-German and non-French projects. The bishops were also hard put to supply German or German-speaking priests for all of the immigrants, and complaints began to pour into Rome against the administration of the Catholic Church in the United States, with emphasis placed upon the undue influence of the Irish in Church leadership.

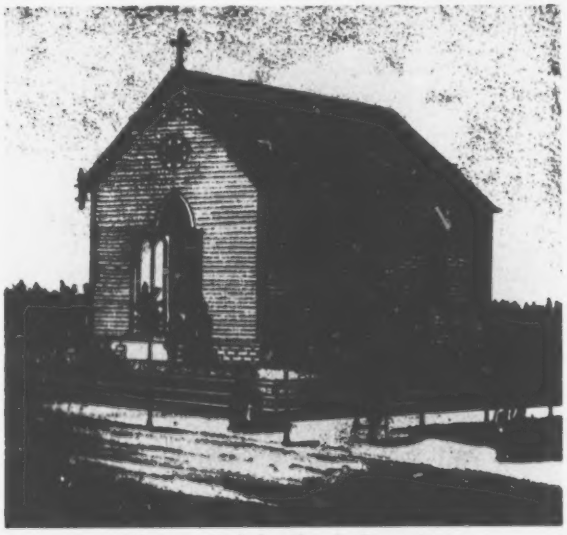
John Gilmary Shea, first historian of the Catholic Church in the United States, editor of the New York *Catholic News* and one of the Americanizers, published an article in the *American Catholic Quarterly Review* challenging such German activity. He said that the German Catholic papers were making "the most contemptuous allusions to American and Irish Catholics," and that to foster such national feelings was a great mistake because it would breed animosity. Since the rising generation would be American in feeling, the Germans should look upon the United States as their own country. If religion remained a matter of nationality it would expire with that nationality. He wrote:

> Those who labor mainly among Catholics of foreign birth, as well as such Catholics themselves, rarely form a conception of the extent to which we Catholics, as a body, are regarded by the people of this country only as a sort of foreign camp in their midst, who will in time scatter and be lost in the mass of the Protestant, or at least non-Catholic population. Though the census will show that the Catholic far exceeds the foreign population, only part of which is Catholic, it is not easy to convince or disabuse them. Many things which they see and know, keep up the delusion. A Protestant will point to the map and say: "Where are your American Catholics? The whole country is laid off in dioceses, as though you owned it, but how is it that your Popes have never found an American Catholic fit to occupy a see west of the Mississippi and Lake St. Clair? There are thousands of miles where no American-born bishop has ever been seen."[3]

German Catholic Church, Lanesboro



German Catholic Church, Chatfield



German Catholic Church, Fountain

Two German priests of St. Louis, Wilhelm Faerber and Ignatius Wapelhorst, were not slow to take up these charges, and in a German-Catholic theological monthly, *Das Pastoral Blatt*, they branded Shea's article as Nativism and Know-Nothingism. They also charged him with insulting prelates who had labored amid unspeakable hardships when no native-born priests could be found in the West. They insisted that Germans always adapted themselves very quickly to a new environment and added:

> Let us allow things quietly to take their course, and to develop themselves in a natural manner. How in the future the different nationalities will unite harmoniously in one people, what is to become of the different languages, of the German churches and schools, will all be arranged later on. Forcible, premature interference is always dangerous. "In nature there is no leap"; this also holds good in the development of things social, political, and religious. Let us cheerfully permit our descendants to settle those questions. When once immigration has entirely ceased, and there lives a generation that has been reared up with its priests, the English language will also be gradually adopted in the churches.[4]

German Catholic leaders in the St. Louis area began at once to apply these principles in practice. They challenged Archbishop Kenrick's policy in regard to German, Bohemian, and Polish congregations in that jurisdiction. Kenrick held, because the decrees of the Council of Trent had been promulgated in the territory of the Louisiana Purchase, that these parishes did not enjoy all the rights and privileges of English-speaking parishes. They were succursal churches for the use of their respective nationalities, and that in one given territory there was to be one parish church, namely the English-speaking church, despite the fact that the German congregations were larger and more active than any other parishes of the area. They began a press campaign for equality, and eighty-two priests sent a petition to the Propaganda Congregation in Rome which had been prepared by the Vicar General of St. Louis, Heinrich Muehlsiepen. Faerber went to Rome to push the petition personally. Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of Propaganda, referred the petition to the archbishops of the United States for their opinions, and it was in this way that they heard of it for the first time. Cardinal Gibbons told Simeoni that the matter would be discussed at the forthcoming Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884, and he assigned it to the Committee on New Business, composed of Archbishops Williams of Boston, Feehan of Chicago, and Heiss of Milwaukee. He stated that he did this because the archbishop of Milwaukee could then have a voice in the discussion. But this committtee reported nothing to the floor on the St. Louis petition, and the Germans present remained silent on the subject throughout all executive and public sessions. When German Catholics continued to question this lack of action, Gibbons was not slow to point out that the German leaders present had initiated no discussion when the opportunity was offered to them.

Petitions to Rome

Bishops Gilmour of Cleveland and Moore of St. Augustine took the decrees of this council to Rome for approval, and there they found that petitions and letters had been coming from German Catholics in the United States requesting Rome to safeguard their interests from the aggressions of English-speaking and Irish Catholics. These two bishops prepared a memorial of their own in which they claimed that a spirit of nationalism was being introduced by deliberate effort, that a conflict would result with consequent loss to religion, while Catholics of all nationalities would become ridiculous in the eyes of the non-Catholic population of the United States. If the Germans formed themselves into a distinct nationalizing movement, it would be more harmful to their Church than a renewal of the Know-Nothing attacks of thirty years earlier.

But almost immediately another organized protest was made in the Milwaukee sector of the "German triangle." After the Baltimore council the Vicar General of Milwaukee, Peter Abbelen, prepared a petition (signed by Archbishop Heiss) which he brought to Rome. Its arguments were strikingly similar to those from St. Louis; he asked Rome to stop forcible Americanization on the part of priests and bishops. But this time the leader among the Americanizers, Archbishop Ireland, was himself on the scene. He and Bishop Keane were at that time in England, on their way to Rome to make arrangements for the founding of the Catholic University of America. When Monsignor O'Connell at the American College informed them by cable of Abbelen's mission, they rushed to Rome and the issue was squarely met. They found that a number of Curia cardinals were exercising a powerful influence in favor of the Germans. They were the Church historian, Josef Cardinal Hergenroether; the Jesuit, Johann Cardinal Franzelin; and two exiled German archbishops, victims of Bismarck's Kulturkampf, Paulus Cardinal Melchers, archbishop of Cologne, and Miecislaus Cardinal Ledochowski, archbishop of Gnesen-Posen. They found that the impression at the Propaganda had been at first entirely in Abbelen's favor, and that it had been proposed to appoint a cardinal protector for the German Catholics in the United States. Ireland and Keane presented a lengthy document to the Propaganda, asking for a delay until the American bishops could be heard. They won their point and then proceeded to cable all of the archbishops and several bishops at home, warning them of the demands the Germans were making. Gibbons summoned a meeting of the archbishops at Philadelphia so they could, as he said, "State our side of the question, as the German bishops have (surreptitiously) already stated theirs." They forwarded on the next mail boat to Rome a defense of their administration, insisting that they were not uprooting old-world customs but that the process of Americanization had already begun and they were determined that Catholics be a part of it. Many individual bishops sent letters: in one Bishop Gilmour of Cleveland wanted the matter taken directly to Pope Leo XIII, and he declared if something were not done, "within twenty-five years the Church in the Mississippi valley would be bound hand and foot to the wheel of Germanism." Bishop William McCloskey declared:

> If these German prelates are allowed special legislation as Germans, great injury is likely to follow to the interests of religion. We will be looked upon as a German Church in an English-speaking country. Let the Italians fancy a German element in the Church of Italy, riding rough shod over the Italians. How would your Cardinals and the Pope fancy it.?[5]

The Congregation of Propaganda gave its decision the following June: since the bishops had been establishing parishes for the respective language groups, the Germans should not demand further privileges; that local bishops should decide whether English or German be used in individua! parishes; and that any person had the right to choose an English-speaking parish after he had reached the age of maturity, if he should so desire.

The Americanizers were jubilant that they had won this point; and despite a hot press and pamphlet campaign that was continued by both sides, the matter was terminated at this point.

Cahensly and the Rafaelsverein

The German question then took on a second and quite different character. For some years a German Catholic layman of extraordinary vision had been working for the spiritual and material welfare of Catholic immigrants as they left European ports. This man, Peter Paul Cahensly, a merchant of Limburg an der Lahn, while pursuing his commercial interésts at Hamburg, Bremen, and LeHavre had become conscious of the thousands of Germans who were leaving these ports for North and South America. After long, tiresome, low-class rail journeys these people arrived exhausted and frightened in a strange port city, such as LeHavre, without knowledge of the French language. Cahensly watched them fall into the hands of unscrupulous agents, landlords, and innkeepers who tricked and robbed them. With the support of the archbishop of Rouen, Henri Bonnechose, he established his first immigrant hotel at LeHavre, persuaded a religious order to take charge, and then began to examine conditions on board ships carrying immigrants to the new world. He made two trips incognito in steerage to Baltimore and New York and recorded his impressions:

> A person could climb only with the greatest difficulty to the upper and rear places because of the small amount of free space which was usually barricaded with boxes and trunks. Besides, almost total darkness existed, and I became frightened when I thought that in these small rooms of indescribable disorder and darkness hundreds of people should spend weeks and months. By dividing the sleeping places, the difference of sex was almost completely neglected, and it is not surprising that under such circumstances immoral situations developed which defy description.[6]

Cahensly resolved to present his case before the yearly assembly of Catholic societies of Germany, known as the Katholikentag. In a short time he had secured official support from the German hierarchy and financial help from the Catholic laity, and a St. Raphaelsverein for the protection of German Catholic immigrants was established under the presidency of Prince Karl Isenburg-Birstein of Offenbach. They requested companies such as the Nord Deutscher Lloyd to establish immigration regulations, petitioned the French and Belgian governments to set up port authorities, and set up immigrant missions at Bremen, Hamburg, Antwerp, and LeHavre. They petitioned President Grant to initiate an international immigration commission, and sent a memorial to each of the American Catholic bishops asking them to take an interest in the needs of immigrants and to support their movement. They received no answers from the United States, nor from their own German government, which looked upon emigration as unpatriotic desertion of the fatherland. The goverment opened a press campaign against the St. Raphaelsverein, imprisoned several of

its agents, and branded the whole movement as a Catholic effort to spirit their numbers out of Germany. Cahensly was elected a member of the Prussian House of Representatives, and later of the Reichstag, and strove through the Center Party to initiate emigration legislation, which the government successfully defeated year after year until 1907; the Emigration Law of that year came too late to help the large majority of German emigrants.

Pope Leo XIII, however, encouraged Cahensly in his efforts, bestowed honors upon him, and suggested to him that the movement be broadened on an international base. Austrian, Italian, Swiss, and French St. Raphael Societies were accordingly founded, and Cahensly made a trip to the United States in 1883 to organize an American branch of the movement to help immigrants when they arrived in American ports. Peoples of all nationalities and faiths were admitted in their hostels, and cards were attached to their persons so they could be recognized and cared for by agents of the society who met them in North and South American ports. This St. Raphael movement, which began in 1865 and continues today, is a most interesting study in international social action and cooperation, supported entirely by free-will offerings; and it seems the first such organized effort in modern times. By 1913 there were 109 St. Raphael agents operating throughout the world: fifteen in Europe, fourteen in Canada, three in Argentina, twenty-two in Brazil, seventeen in Uruguay, twleve each in Africa and Australia, two in Chili, one each in Mexico and Peru, and twenty in the United States.

Archbishop Ireland's Attack

The St. Raphael immigration movement became a part of the nationality question in the United States in an interesting manner. Cahensly had requested the German Catholics of America to support the movement. After the first rebuff of the St. Louis and Milwaukee petitions, the German Catholic bishops and priests had organized themselves into a Deutsch-Amerikaner Priester-Verein, began yearly meetings to pursue their interests, and organized (with the German Catholic laity) a yearly American Katholikentag as a manifestation of their solidarity and purpose. This movement was looked upon with serious misgivings by American Catholics, and when these German unions swung behind Cahensly a second conflict emerged. Collections were made throughout the United States to erect the Leo House on West 23rd Street in New York to care for incoming immigrants, guide them on their journey, and direct them to Catholic colonies in the West. What was an international movement at its base thus became in the United States a part of the Germanizing effort. Accordingly, when fifty-one representatives of the St. Raphael societies from seven nations met in Lucerne in December of 1890, and submitted a memorial to Rome asking for definite rights for Catholic immigrants, it was interpreted in the United States as another movement for German particularism. The Lucerne memorialists asked for separate churches for each nationality, priests of the same nationality as their congregations, instruction in the mother tongues, separate parochial schools for each nationality, equal rights to each nationality, and most important of all, proportional representation in the hierarchy for each nationality. Monsignor O'Connell at the American College again warned Archbishop Ireland of what was going on, and together they worked through their friends in the Associated Press to publicize the movement as a German plot by issuing cables to the press from Berlin. Archbishop Ireland also called in the reporters,

Interior, St. Agnes Church, 550-554 LaFond, St. Paul, ca. 1920.

branded the movement as "Cahenslyism," and forcefully declared:

> What is the most strange feature in this whole Lucerne movement is the impudence of these men in undertaking to meddle under any pretext in the Catholic affairs of America. This is simply unpardonable and all American Catholics will treasure up the affront for future action. We acknowledge the Pope of Rome as our chieftain in spiritual matters and we are glad to receive directions from him, but men in Germany or Switzerland or Ireland must mind their own business and be still as to ours.
>
> Nor is this the most irritating fact in this movement. The inspiration of the work in Europe comes, the dispatch tells us, from a clique in America . . . .
>
> Our bishops will be chosen for their offices without regard to their race or their birthplace. The condition for their elevation being their fitness, and for this fitness two things will be required: that they be strong in Catholicity and strong in Americanism.
>
> Indeed, Mr. Cahensly and his supporters are somewhat excusable when they see in Americans naught else, or little else, than foreigners or foreign dominations. This is largely, they perceive, the case in politics. Why should it not be, they ask, in religion? When we will be more American in civil and political matters, there will be fewer petitions from *vereins* in America and from conferences in Lucerne for the foreignizing of Catholics in America.[7]

The words of the archbishop of St. Paul on this occasion, as on so many others, evoked warm support from non-Catholics. The Lucerne Memorial became an issue of national importance, and the press of the nation discussed it, pro and con, while Catholics took sides to such an extent that Cardinal Gibbons declared it was "his greatest battle." He was determined that the Catholic Church would continue homogeneous like the nation. He was firmly convinced that nationalist groups in the Church would tend to become political elements. He deprecated the introduction of foreign nationalism and class voting into national politics. He and the other Americanizers were close friends of Theodore Roosevelt, Senator Albert Beveridge of Indiana, William McKinley, and Benjamin Harrison, and were part of the movement toward American national consciousness that was taking over the center of the stage in national life. The newer immigrant groups, like the Germans, did not participate at once and so readily in this growing vision of the so-called "inevitable destiny" of the American people. German Catholics in particular had grown accustomed in Germany to look upon their government as oppressive, liberal, and anti-religious, and carried that same prejudice with them to the new world.

A large majority of American bishops began writing to Rome in protest against the memorial, and they insisted that Gibbons assemble a refutation and

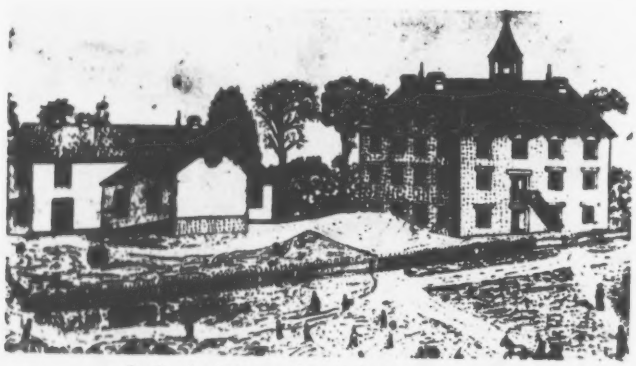
St. Agnes Church

write directly to the Pope. The cardinal was vacationing at Cape May, N.J., at the time, and while returning along the boardwalk one day he met President Harrison, who invited him to stop at his cottage. There the President discussed the Lucerne Memorial at length with Gibbons, congratulated him on the public stand he had taken against it, said he would have made a public statement himself seconding Gibbons' refutation but was afraid he would be accused of interfering in church matters. He told the Cardinal that he felt the United States was no longer a missionary country, and of all men the bishops of the church should be in full harmony with the political institutions and sentiments of the country. Gibbons was not slow to report this conversation to the papal secretary of state, Mario Cardinal Rampolla. The decision of Rome on the Lucerne petition had already been sent, however, and it was exactly as the Americanizers desired. Leo XIII had stated that the plan was neither opportune nor necessary, and that existing procedures would continue according to the proposals of the national episcopate.

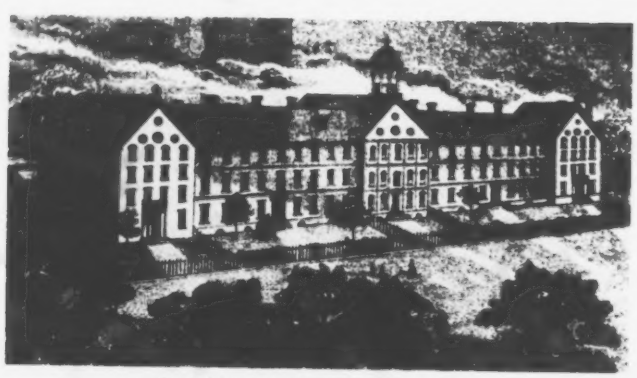
Archbishop Ireland was pleased but at the same time determined to make a national issue of the affair. He asked his good friend Senator Cushman Kellogg Davis, Republican Senator from Minnesota, to deliver a speech on the floor of the Senate against foreign interference in American life. Davis did this on April 22, 1892, and branded the Lucerne Memorial as a prostitution of religious power to political purposes, while making a personal attack on Cahensly as a tool of the German government.

It is on this point specifically that an acquittal is owed in simple justice. To attack Cahensly without checking or at least giving an ear to his clear denials of having arranged a plot; to release manufactured news

Sketch of St. John's on the banks of the Mississippi in 1856.



St. Louis Abbey and St. John's College, 1868.



St. John's College, Collegeville, 1875.

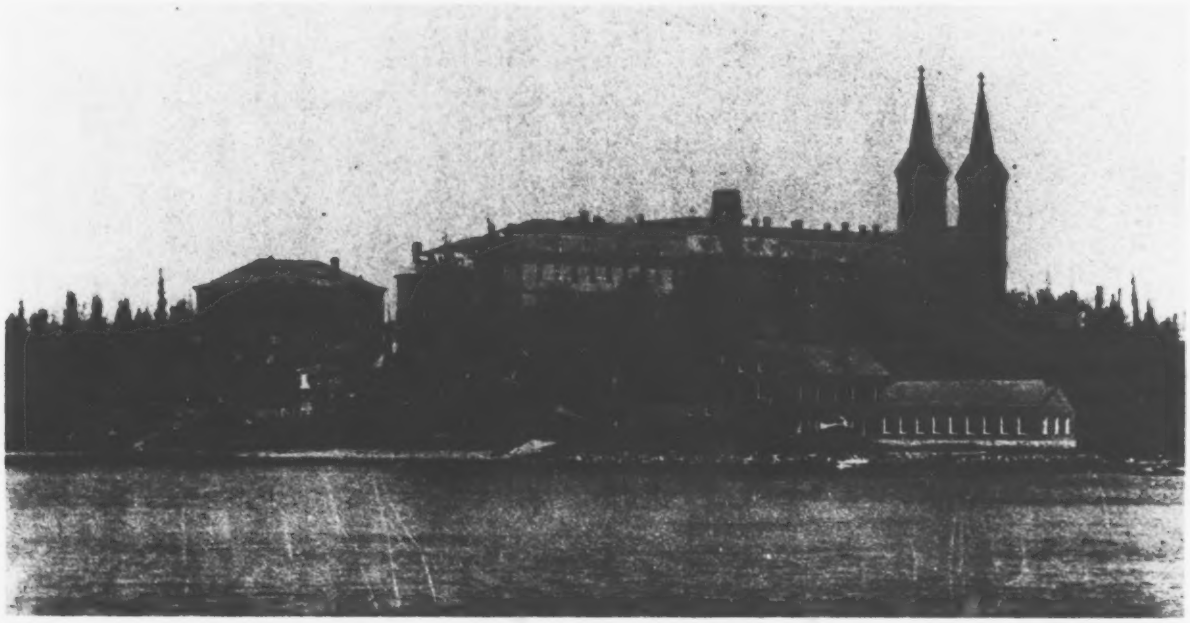
releases in which his name was associated with a conspiracy; to coin a phrase, playing upon the name of a man who had worked as a pioneer in international social work among immigrants before any American bishops or societies had inaugurated such activity; to associate political intrigue of a Pan-German character with a man who had been at odds since 1871 with his own government over immigrant care — only reveal the emotional intensity of the controversy of these years. At the same time the Lucerne Memorialists cannot be exonerated from an obvious lack of understanding of American conditions, nor from the colonial attitude so apparent in their requests.

Americanization Wins Out

The two aspects of the German Catholic problem discussed here, though fundamental, do not approach a thorough analysis of its eventual outcome. It would, perhaps, be quite interesting to bring in, for example: the ideal of total abstinence which the Irish Americanizers tried to enforce on the Germans, who cherished their beer and continental observance of the Sunday; the pressures that were brought to bear on the appointment of English-speaking bishops each time an issue of succession arose in a German-populated diocese; Archbishop Ireland's far-sighted cooperation with the public school system in Faribault and Stillwater, which caused Germans, Jesuits, and conservatives among Catholics in the United States to call it an open attack on their cherished parochial school system; the conflict among Germans and Americanizers in the faculties of the Catholic University of America; the role of the first apostolic delegate to the United States, Frencesco Cardinal Satolli, and his siding first with the liberals and then with the conservatives; the charges of Liberalism, Modernism, and lack of theological orthodoxy which were hurled at the Americanizers by German Catholic intellectuals; and finally the events leading up to Pope Leo XIII's tempering encyclical letter on Americanism, *Testem Benevolentiae*.

The German Catholics eventually came to accept the position of the Americanizers, as did the other immigrant groups. Their mother tongue was dying out, American national habits were being assimilated, the United States was becoming recognized by them as a nation. No more protesting memorials were forwarded to Rome, since German parishes gradually became mixed parishes, national parishes slowly gave way to territorial parishes, and the German parishes became distinguished only by a spirit of German Catholicism as practiced by American citizens of German origin. Interest in the appointment of bishops of German ancestry and tongue became an academic question when the American Germans took their place in national life as one of the many elements that went to make up one people.

On the other hand, the Americanizers saw their program accomplished and their ideals fulfilled by this process of German assimilation. Their aims had unquestionably been progressive, but their means were sometimes questionable. The Americanizers on their part ceased their intemperate charges about a conspiracy, and came to realize in time the valuable contribution of Germans to life in the United States. The parochial school system, so vigorously defended by German Catholics, was accepted as a policy of the Church; several points of the Lucerne Memorial and the St. Raphael program, such as colonizing projects and care for immigrants and displaced persons, were also incorporated into American Catholic practice. From the German examples of a strong press and vigorous society activity much was learned. The more spirited emphasis on use of the English language was left to time and environment rather than to stern admonitions, which were open to misrepresentation and suspicion by immigrants not yet fully at home in



St. John's College, Collegeville, ca. 1911.

Assumption Church, 51 W. 9th Street, St. Paul, ca. 1900.

American life. Perhaps, as more and more educators are now saying, the pluralistic linguistic and cultural values of the immigrant groups were recognized and respected too late in American life, and the values which individual nationality groups could contribute from their heritage to the enrichment of American life were not appreciated soon enough.

It is interesting today to watch growing demands for the teaching of foreign languages on all levels of the Catholic educational system. We have been going through a vigorous analysis of the quality of American Catholic intellectual life, and searching questions have been asked about our proportional contribution to cultural life and leadership. The record of German Catholic contributions has been limited, and a rewarding study could be made as to whether too hasty Americanization was a serious cause. Another area that awaits the historian of intellectual and religious life is the nature and character of American Catholic spirituality, or interior life, which has not been touched as yet. Why has there been such a slow and reluctant response to the ideals of community worship, of the liturgical movement, of a respect for the Catholic traditions of participation, singing and a Scriptural-centered life? Were immigrant groups such as the Germans swept into the dominant current of the "American" secular cultural patterns? What happened to the ancient Catholic tradition of the arts and crafts in American Catholic life and educational institutions?

I personally think that such aspects of a Christian culture could have developed and received real impetus from immigrant groups like the Germans, if they had not been up-rooted and shorn of their true identity so rapidly and completely.

Apart from these considerations, the leaders of the Catholic Church in the United States who had encouraged Americanization made a contribution to the nation. Some nine million Catholic immigrants from over twenty countries had come to American shores in the century from 1820 to 1920. This vast number of settlers, almost half of the total net immigration to the United States of that period, was encouraged to understand and practice American democratic ideals by their new spiritual leaders. Divergent groups of people, like the Germans, were encouraged to amalgamate and adapt themselves. As a result a significant number of Catholic immigrants from Europe learned to live together as Americans.

Father Colman J. Barry, O.S.B., is a historian and theologian who first joined the St. John's University faculty in 1951; since 1977 he has been executive director of the St. John's Institute for Spirituality. During the intervening years Barry was president of St. John's University (1963-73), dean of the School of Religious Studies at the Catholic University of America (1973-77), and taught at Yale and Notre Dame as well as at St. John's and Catholic University. His books include: *The Catholic Church and German Americans* (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1953); *Worship and Work* (St. Paul: North Central Publishing, 1956) — a history of the German Benedictine St. John's Abbey; *Catholic Minnesota* (St. Paul: Catholic Aid Society, 1958); *American Nuncio: Cardinal Aloysius Muench* (Collegeville, Mn.: St. John's University Press, 1969); and *Upon These Rocks* (Collegeville, Mn.: St. John's University Press, 1973) — a history of the Catholic Church in the Bahamas.

Notes

[1]*St. Raphael's Blatt*, I (January, 1886), 7.

[2]K. Winkler, "Koenig Ludwig I von Bayern und die deutschen Katholiken in Nordamerika," *Historish-politische Blaetter fuer das katholische Deutschland*, CLXIX (1922), 706.

[3]*American Catholic Quarterly Review*, VIII (July, 1883), 509-529.

[4]The Reverends Wilhelm Faerber and Ignatius Wapelhorst, O.F.M., "The Future of Foreign-Born Catholics; and Fears and Hopes for the Catholic Church and Schools in the United States" (St. Louis, 1884), p. 13.

[5]Archives of the Abbey of St. Paul Outside the Walls, Rome: Bishop William McCloskey to Abbot Bernard Smith, Louisville, 16 December, 1886.

[6]Archives of the Diocese of Limburg an der Lahn: Peter Paul Cahensly, "Kirchliche Fuersorge fuer die Auswanderer," p. 18.

[7]*New York Herald*, 31 May, 1891.

Cultural Integrity and the Role of Religion

by Timothy J. Kloberdanz

The German immigrants who came to this country brought with them much more than battered Old Country trunks and the few personal belongings they could carry. Like immigrants from other lands, they possessed an invisible yet overwhelming amount of cultural baggage. This intangible body of material comprised not only their traditional beliefs, customs, values, attitudes, spiritualism, and earthy aspirations, but their language and their entire *Weltanschauung* as well. Although few of the immigrants had the luxury of transporting or even owning books printed in their native country, they did carry with them a rich oral literature of mythological accounts, humorous anecdotes, legends, and innumerable folk tales like the following:

> One Sunday people were going to church in a village. As the pastor walked toward the church, a big black sow came running along. She jumped right between his legs, so that he had to sit on her and go with her. In this fashion he appeared astride her in the middle of the church and shouted to the people, "People, stick to God; I have to leave with the devil."[1]

The above story (originally recorded in the German dialect of Hesse) is of unusual interest because it indicates that virtually anyone — even in the house of God — is a potential victim of mysterious and terrible forces. Imagine the confusion that must have existed in the minds of listeners who heard such a frightening tale! Yet the story also indicates something of comfort to those who are chilled by its telling: one need not be forever lost if one is truly determined to "stick to God." Surely the immigrants who made the long, perilous journey from their Old Country villages to the New World contemplated — perhaps in the damp darkness of steerage — the hardships that awaited them. They realized that a new life lay ahead and that its full acceptance would be no easy task. But for many immigrants there was security in knowing that while no tree or brook or meadow anywhere in the New World would be the same as those they had known in their native country, their religious worship would remain unchanged. Catholic Germans settling in America, for example, would be able to share in the mystery of the Mass just as their ancestors had done for untold centuries in their homeland. This was vitally important to the immigrant because it meant that so long as he remained faithful to his religious traditions, at least some tie to the Old Country could be maintained. The "tie that binds," in this particular case, was not to be taken lightly, for it symbolized to the immigrant a fragile link between the golden age of the Old Country and the sparkling promise of the new.

I found Fr. Colman J. Barry's paper on "Religious and Language Experiences of German-Catholic Americans" an interesting piece of historical research. The paper addresses a relatively obscure issue in the immigration history of this country, namely the controversial role of the Roman Catholic Church in Americanizing German Catholics fresh from Europe. Fr. Barry began his paper by referring to the Catholic Church as an immigrant institution. I purposefully began my own remarks by referring to the German immigrants themselves and the seldom-discussed cultural baggage they brought with them. This anthropological orientation reflects my own training, research, and personal views in regard to the subject

Altar in a Lutheran church, made by Oscar Schmiedel, St. Peter, 1927.

before us. I hope this will be kept in mind as I discuss Fr. Barry's provocative paper since I wish to elaborate on a few of the points that he made rather than debate them.

Fr. Barry traced the early development of German-American Catholic history in a highly organized fashion, beginning with the impetus given German immigration after 1865 and culminating with the moral defeat of the Lucerne Memorial sent to Pope Leo XIII in 1891. His focus, however, was primarily on the Catholic Church, and on influential members of its hierarchy who were engaged in nothing less than a power struggle. What was at stake was not merely whether ethnic Irish or ethnic German wings of the American Catholic Church would gain ecclesiastical control but the fate of millions of immigrant Catholics, many of whom wished to retain their cultural integrity. It is obvious that many Catholic leaders of the American church — for example, James Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul — did not want their institution to appear too foreign or nationalistic to non-Catholic Americans in the latter part of the nineteenth century. They were well aware of the harmful suspicions and misconceptions harbored by many non-Catholics about a church whose visible head of authority was thousands of miles away in Rome. Thus, American Catholic leaders like Archbishop Ireland did everything in their power to prove that the church could exist in complete harmony with American democratic ideals. But the utter irony is this: Catholic Americanizers who feared the disruptive forces of foreign nationalism reacted by espousing and implementing domestic nationalism within the church. This contradictory stand must have dismayed and bewildered innumerable immigrant Catholics, who sought cultural as well as spiritual refuge in the church.

Old World Catholic Heritage

Many immigrant Catholics — especially those from peasant backgrounds in Europe — supported the church physically as well as spiritually. Many small agricultural centers in Catholic Europe were noted for their awesome cathedrals and exquisitely built chapels that stood in marked contrast to the humble dwellings of the faithful. To the peasant, nothing was too good for God, the Church, or its clerical servants. The relationship between the peasant and the church was usually a reciprocal one. The local church cared for the spiritual needs of the peasant — from the cradle to the grave — and the peasant, in turn, responded by remaining loyal to the church. For many Catholics in Europe, the process of Christianization was a very gradual one; over a period of time, distinct cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious elements were neatly and effectively woven together to withstand outside influence. This "syncretism" added richness not only to the peasant's way of life but to each local manifestation of the Catholic Church. Such a blending of cultural tradition and religious expression disturbed some theological purists, but there is no doubt that syncretism contributed to the vitality of Catholicism in peasant regions throughout Catholic Europe.

The Catholic immigrants who came to the United States from 1865 to 1900 — and most of them were peasants — brought with them distinct cultural attitudes toward their religion. True, they worshipped the same God and participated in what was essentially the same Mass, but they viewed what was a universal religion in culturally defined ways. All said the same basic prayers and the same rosary but in different languages. All prayed to the Virgin Mary and the saints, but the emphasis and tenor of the peasants' prayers were vastly different. Italian peasants brought to America a special devotion to the Holy Family; Irish Catholics fervently erected impressive statues of St. Patrick; German Catholics emphasized the holy deeds of St. Boniface; and German Catholic colonists from Eastern Europe paid special attention to Saints Appolonia, Wendelin, and Rochus. Such local emphases and folk-interpretations of Catholicism no doubt caused serious frustration to Anglo-American clergymen who encountered this phenomenon on an increasingly wide scale. But to immigrant Catholics, their traditional ways of worship were to be safeguarded; any attempt on the part of the clergy to uproot them was viewed not only as sacrilege but as an attack on the ancestral culture which formed the very basis of the immigrant's identity.

On November 9, 1886, when Fr. P. M. Abbelen of Milwaukee submitted what became known as the "Abbelen Memorial," he stressed the need for the Catholic Church to recognize and protect the Old World heritage of its recently arrived members. Although the Memorial drew sharp criticism from the Americanizers within the church, including Archbishop Ireland, it remains to this day an eloquent plea for an appreciative recognition of cultural differences. Fr. Abbelen admitted that assimilation was a "natural formative process," but argued that it should not be accelerated "by suppressing the language and customs of the Germans."[2] In this impressive document, Fr. Abbelen wisely contrasted the differing cultures of Irish and German Catholics: he noted that the Irish "on account of the oppression and persecution which they suffered for religion's sake in their own land, love simplicity in divine service"; the Germans, on the other hand,

> . . . love the beauty of the church edifice and the pomp of ceremonies, belfries and bells, organs and sacred music, processions, feast days, sodalities, and the most solemn celebration of First Communion and weddings. These and other like things, although not essential to Catholic faith and life, foster piety and are so dear and sacred to the faithful that not without great danger could they be taken away from them.[3]

Yet the Catholic Church was a source of more than simple spiritual guidance and inspiration to the German immigrant. Fr. Barry points out that the Catholic Germans displayed a concern for their spiritual well-being by erecting churches and parish schools soon after arriving in this country. In my view, this concern for separate churches and separate schools reflected their equally strong desire to maintain cultural integrity. It is, I admit, extremely difficult to separate religion and culture in this instance, and, in fact, this is precisely the point German

German Infant School, St. Peter, 1867.

priests and bishops were repeatedly making in the latter part of the last century. Fr. Abbelen's eloquent memorial is solid evidence for this contention.

Fragmented Heritage

Nowhere in Fr. Barry's paper is mention made of something that I think is crucial in understanding the unique nature of German Catholic ethnicity: the fact that immigrant Germans differed from nearly all other ethnic groups because of their fragmented religious heritage. Unlike the Italians and Poles, who were united by a religious as well as by a common national base, the German immigrant understood no such unity. While Italians from different geographic areas of Italy could converse and freely socialize in the neighborhood tavern or cafe without fear of social ridicule, the German Catholic immigrant maintained his ethnic identity exclusively through the church and its affiliated organizations. This presented no small problem to the homesick German Catholic immigrant who, in an Irish Catholic American setting, felt painfully more at home among Protestant Germans who spoke and sang the cherished language of the homeland.

It is ironic, perhaps, that of all the personalities Fr. Barry discusses the one who stands out above all others — including even members of the church hierarchy — is the German layman Peter Paul Cahensly. His concern for the spiritual and material well-being of the immigrant is a bright page in an otherwise gloomy chapter of American Catholic immigration history. It is well that Fr. Barry explains why a belated acquittal is owed him "in simple justice." Professor La Vern J. Rippley, in his fine book, *The German-Americans*, points out that Cahensly also championed the language and cultural rights of Slavic and Italian American immigrants in the early 1900s — a fact that should help bury forever the contrived characterization of Cahensly as a tool of Pan-Germanism.[4]

The other prominent figure in Fr. Barry's paper is Archbishop John Ireland, the outspoken advocate of immigrant homogenization. Fr. James H. Moynihan, in his biography of Archbishop Ireland,[5] explained why the archbishop was a militant prohibitionist and why he took such a firm stand against foreignism in the church. Unfortunately, Fr. Moynihan did not explain why Archbishop Ireland encouraged Minnesota Senator Davis to attack Cahensly viciously from the floor of the U.S. Senate; nor did Fr. Moynihan describe the rocky (and sometimes disastrous) relations Archbishop Ireland had with other ethnic groups, such as the Carpatho-Ruthenian Uniats. Fr. Moynihan cautioned readers of the biography to judge the late archbishop from a distance, just as one would judge a high mountain that is too expansive to view adequately if one stands too close.[6] Now, as the "valley of years" widens, it is Peter Paul Cahensly (ironically known to his countrymen as "der kleine Cahensly" because of his small physical stature[7]) who dwarfs the sullen figure of the archbishop.

Fr. Barry concludes his paper by posing some very provocative questions. For example, he asks: Why has there been a slow and reluctant response (on the part of Catholics) to the ideals of community worship? I think part of the answer is that many ethnic Catholics have been unable to abandon certain church practices that are closely intertwined with distinct Old World traditions. In my own field research, I have worked with conservative German Catholics who have felt compelled to add Latin church hymns to their repertory of "Old Country" folksongs. Much of what

has been done away with by the church has been working its way into the folk religion and private devotions of the German Catholics. In some ways, the Second Vatican Council dealt a severe blow to ethnic American Catholics who had struggled to perpetuate an Old World emphasis on saints, shrines, and feastdays in locally defined ways. Thus, the English languge Mass and such innovations as "community worship" were looked upon by some ethnic Catholics as further attempts by the Church to homogenize its diverse cultural elements.

German Catholic Assimilation

In the final pages of Fr. Barry's paper, he gives the impression that the process of German Catholic assimilation has ended. I myself do not think of German Catholic assimilation as history: it is an ongoing process that still has not reached the completion point many Americanizers of the late 19th century had speculated that it would attain by our present day.

This conference is not a requiem for German-American culture: it is a celebration of its continued vitality and importance in modern life. I do not mean to imply that no German-Americans lost their ethnic identity, for many surely did. But let us not overlook the numerous Americans of German descent here in Minnesota and elsewhere who have retained their cultural identity in varying degrees, including a significant number of German Catholics. Like the first German immigrants who made the long voyage to America, countless German-Americans today — perhaps of the third or fourth generation — feel compelled to cling to certain Old Country traditions they believe are important (as well as relevant) components of everyday life.

Perhaps German-American Catholics have not been able to retain as much of their European heritage as they would desire, but I do not think this is their failing alone. As outlined in Fr. Barry's paper, reasons for the disintegration of German Catholic culture in this country can be traced, in part, to the Americanizing efforts of early movements within the church. Perhaps the American Catholic Church did not actively suppress Old Country traditions, but it did little to recognize or encourage their faithful practice. In other words, the Old World reciprocal relationship between church and parishioner gradually broke down in this country. Loyal church members were expected to continue supporting the church physically and spiritually, but the church's role as a protector of spiritual and cultural values was deemphasized. If indeed the church offered immigrants cultural identity, it was designed to reflect the political and social realities of the new country, not the old.

In looking specifically at the contemporary situation here in the state of Minnesota, it is interesting to note that those German-American groups which have unquestionably maintained a high degree of their Old World identity — in language, religion and ideals include the Amish in Todd County, the Hutterian Brethren in western Minnesota, and to a lesser extent the Low-German-speaking Mennonites of Mountain Lake. All three of these groups form religious as well as distinct cultural enclaves. Indeed, one would be hard-pressed to try to separate their religion from the rest of their culture. But herein, I think, lies the real secret: when the religion of a people is freely integrated into nearly every aspect of their entire cultural being, both cultural integrity and religion are doubly fortified and sustained by a common sense of purpose. Could this realization have been the secret that so many German-American priests, bishops, and laymen comprehended even in the last century? Perhaps it was for this reason that German Catholics fought so determinedly for separate treatment and recognition as a distinct cultural group.

Timothy J. Kloberdanz of the North Dakota State University Department of Sociology - Anthropology, has a B.A. from the University of Colorado and an M.A. from Colorado State. Athough he has also done research and published articles about North American Indian cultures, his major work has been in German-American ethnographic and folkloristic research, especially concentrated on the Germans from Russia.

Notes

[1]Kurt Ranke, ed., *Folktales of Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 190.

[2]Colman J. Barry, *The Catholic Church and German Americans* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953), p. 295.

[3]Barry, p. 294.

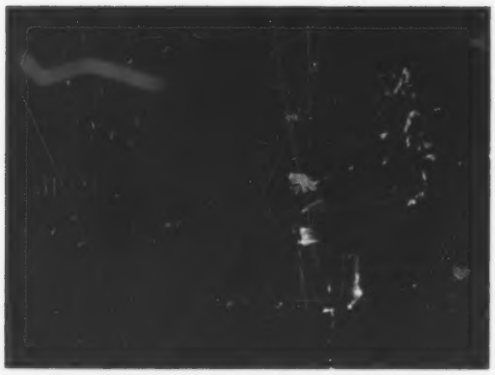
[4]La Vern J. Rippley, *The German-Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976), p. 114.

[5]James H. Moynihan, *The Life of Archbishop John Ireland* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953).

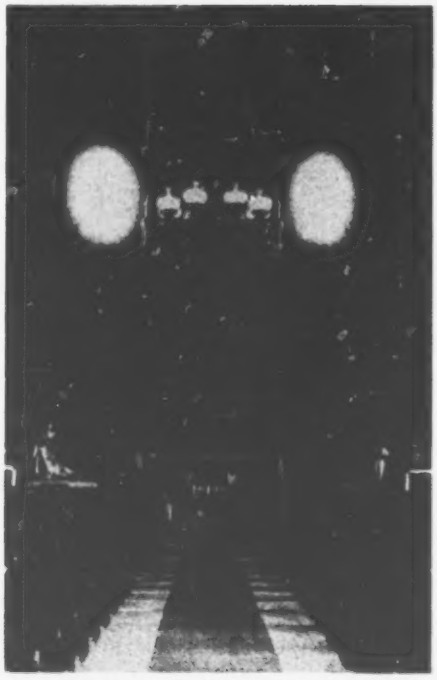
[6]Moynihan, pp. 384-385.

[7]Barry, p. 34.

Bethlehem Presbyterian Church (German), 311 Ramsey, St. Paul, ca. 1900. The church was built by Cass Gilbert.



An enlargement of the sign appearing on the front of the Bethlehem Presbyterian Church.



Interior, St. Mary's German Catholic Church, Stillwater, 1908.

Church of St. Joseph, completed in 1870.

German School, Eitzen, ca. 1908.

Alternate Research Strategies

by Alan Graebner

The very existence of this session and Father Colman's paper are based on the assumption that one cannot fully make sense of the ethnic experience without coming to grips with the religious dimension; nor can one fully make sense of the religious experience without coming to grips with the ethnic dimension. I happen to share wholeheartedly that view, but I mention it because I believe it ought to be explicit. Ideally it ought to be fully examined and amplified here, but time does not permit. That being the case, I cannot do better than to refer anyone interested in the matter to the long and subtle argument made by Timothy Smith in the *American Historical Review* less than a year ago.[1]

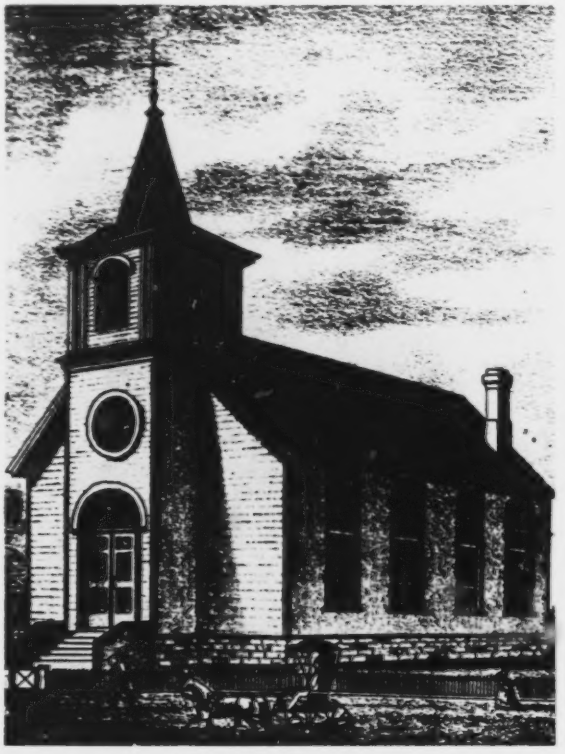
The story Father Colman retells revolves essentially around members of the hierarchy and a few notables. Such an approach is not utterly inappropriate, given the structure and locus of authority within Roman Catholicism. Surely it would be parochial to ignore the extent to which lives in this state were affected by decisions made far away and high up. But especially when we are concerned about the experience in Minnesota, I find the approach Father Colman has taken to be both curious and unsatisfactory. It *is* possible to say things about the moon by studying the sun, its energy diffusion and gravitational field. But one can say a lot more about the moon if one looks directly and specifically at it. And still more if one goes there via instrumentation and human observers.

We are all, I am sure, acquainted with the book review that is not a review at all, but instead a wish that the author had written the book the reviewer would have found interesting. I am trying to suggest something more than that here. The approach Father Colman has taken runs the serious risk of misleading those interested in the German Catholic experience in Minnesota. Let me first explain some of my reservations about that approach, and then suggest some areas I believe in need of energetic study.

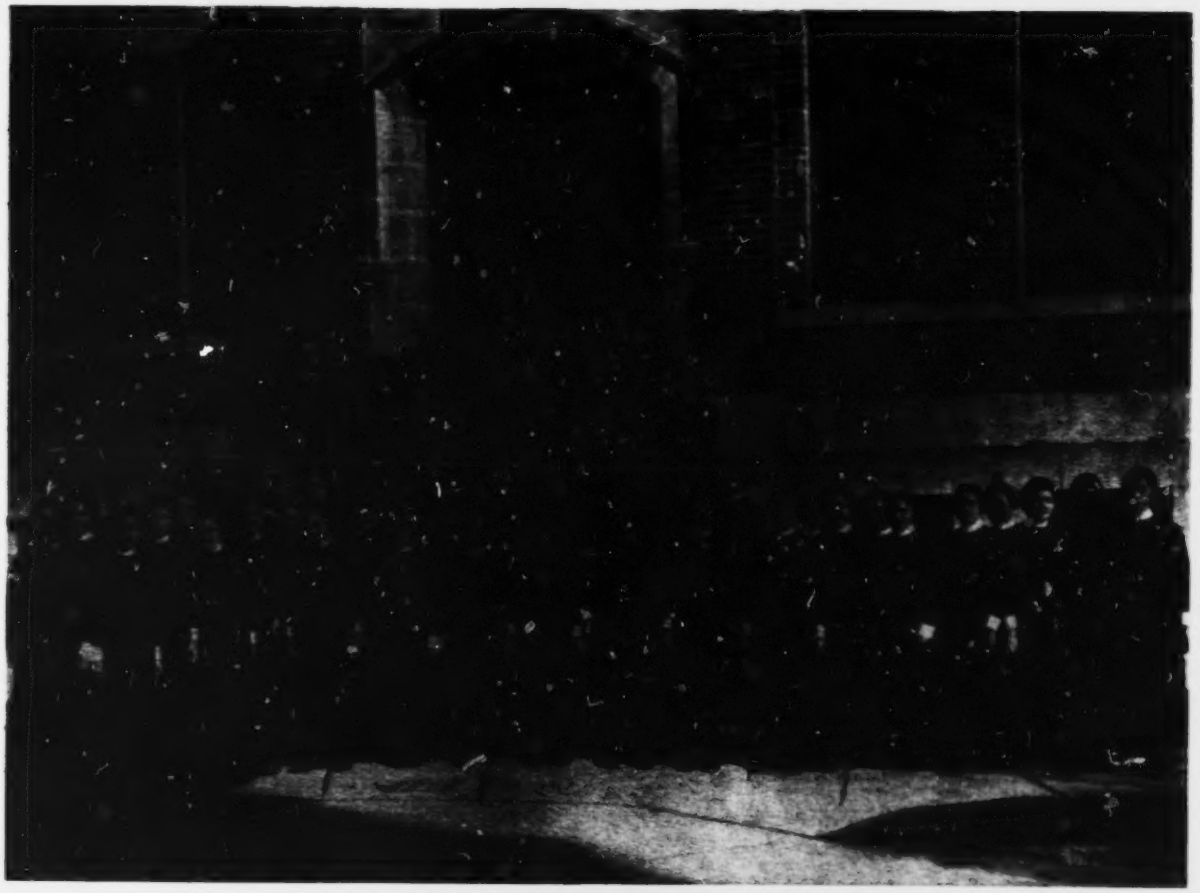
My own examination of immigrant religious organizations, and more recently of the history of women, has made me very sensitive to a historical orientation that casts any group — especially any numerically large group — into a passive role. As acted upon rather than, at least at some points, actors in their own right. Of course, when one has as energetic and flamboyant and articulate a figure on the stage as Archbishop John Ireland, it is easy to miss quiet action for all the shouting and stamping around. It is easy to slip unconsciously into the working assumption (though not necessarily the principle) that the laity and even large numbers of parish pastors were essentially inert ingredients of the churchly compound. But it seems to me undebatable that such passivity ought never to be assumed, and, where proven, ought itself to be the subject of perplexed inquiry. One of the chief recommendations of local history, of which this conference is an example, is that it addresses the question without apology: what happened in *this* place with *these* people, disregarding at least for the moment the headlines from Washington, Rome, or some other place.

Another reservation I have about this paper is that conceptually it does not appear to take advantage of the riches available in recent years. Ethnicity has received an overwhelming amount of attention of late. Further, a number of very fine studies of German immigrant communities are recently in print. I will refrain from running through the list, mostly for fear of appearing to condemn some book by overlooking it; but since she is on the program, Kathy Conzen's book on Milwaukee[2] surely deserves mention.

I hope I am not playing the "have-you-read-that book?" one-upmanship, in part because I could easily



German Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Church, Potsdam.



Group of postulants at St. Benedict's, Oct. 1923.

be beaten in such a contest. What I want to emphasize is that the bibliography is a burgeoning one and offers competitive conceptual models among which one must choose. Further, the local studies offer opportunities for comparative work that can be extraordinarily illuminating. How did the German Catholic experience in Stearns County compare to that of the hill country of central Texas, the south side of St. Louis, or the plains of Saskatchewan? To be blunt, we don't know as yet whether there *was* a Minnesota German Catholic experience in any way that cannot be subsumed under a heading such as the Midwestern German Catholic experience, or even the German Catholic experience in America. Father Colman's paper would imply the last.

The comparative approach deserves attention also in another respect. Was there a Minnesota experience or were there Minnesota experiences? Isn't it a bit risky to assume that the experience of German Catholic women was the same as the experience of German Catholic men? Did the experience, whatever it was, vary by the source in Germany of the immigrants? Did the experience vary along a rural-urban continuum? Or along a continuum measuring concentration of immigrant settlement? Was the experience of the 1860s at all comparable to that of the 1890s? Did it make any difference for the German Catholic experience whether one's archbishop was named Ireland or Corrigan? I dwell on these questions for two reasons: one is to indicate fruitful avenues of investigations. The other is to emphasize the vastness of the unknown.

A moment ago I spoke of utilizing local studies of other areas for a comparative approach. One of the problems here is finding sufficient parallelism. A study of Texas Germans, for instance, may simply have dealt with the wrong questions for our investigation of Minnesota German religious experience. As is fitting in a profession and discipline as individualistic as this one, each scholar tends to ask idiosyncratic questions. But I sometimes think one can make a rough division in description of approach. Those who have studied a German community as in Cincinnati or St. Louis or Milwaukee have understandably tended to see it as a whole. They concentrate on Lutheran Germans or Catholic Germans. By contrast, those who have done studies of the ethnic religious communities have tended to see *that* part. They concentrate on German Lutherans or German Catholics. The first scholar does primary research in what was going on in a community, then perhaps reads some background studies on the religious affiliations found there. The other scholar does primary research on ecclesiastical organization, then perhaps reads some background studies on local communities. Rarely does one find studies which are equally well informed and interested in both sides of these intersecting loyalties and identities.

Already in the nineteenth century it was com-

monplace to distinguish some German Catholics, Lutherans, Freethinkers, and Jews: what one twentieth century memoir inelegantly referred to as the church Germans and the beer Germans. Would it not be useful to dissect these loyalties and identities to separate carefully the various strands? At what point and to what extent were a given body of people German Catholics or Catholic Germans? To what extent was there a mixing of the various German groups, for what purposes, and with what self-consciousness?

Of course a question like that is safe enough for a reactor to drop in. Successfully investigating it is another matter entirely. The available resources are recalcitrant to say the least. My expectation, however, is that the question can be answered not by newspaper editorials, but on the local level, speaking about specific lives.

That may serve as a bridge to my last point. Starting a decade or so ago, American colonial historians began borrowing historical demographic techniques from English and French historians, with spectacular results. One especially rewarding venture has been family reconstitution. Working in a small community, the historian reconstructs it person by person, putting families together in the process and following them generation by generation. It strikes me that the historian of the German religious experience would do well to borrow this technique and engage in what might be called parish reconstitution. Surely there exist some places in Minnesota where a combination of ecclesiastical and secular records exist which would allow one to reconstruct the community in such a way as to speak with specificity and authority about developments there. The labor involved would be awesome, but I suspect that the rewards would be great.

How to sum up? I suppose the refrain to my song runs: we don't know much yet, and had best be careful how we set about learning more.

Alan Graebner, associate professor of history at the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minnesota, received his B.A. at Valparaiso University and both his M.A. and Ph.D. from Columbia. Before taking his present position, he taught history at Concordia (Moorhead) from 1965 to 1969. He has published articles in the *Journal of Social History*, the *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, and elsewhere; and two books — *Uncertain Saints: The Laity in the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, 1900-1970* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975); and *After Eve: The New Feminism* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1972).

Moravian Church, Chaska, ca. 1920.

Ethnicity and Religion: The German-American Experience

by Diana M. Rankin

In considered response to Father Colman Barry's paper on German-Catholic Americans, I would like to pursue three aspects of the topic. The first of these points out the many similarities between the experience of German-American Catholics and that of German-American Lutherans. The second involves the relationship of ethnicity to what Father Barry termed the "spirit of German Catholicism as practiced by American citizens of German origin." The third suggests that the perspective, documentation, and analytical techniques used in folklore studies contain the key to discovering how those American citizens recognize and express their German Catholic heritage today.

The immigration historians Marcus Lee Hansen and Oscar Handlin have described the ways in which religion provided the immigrant with a sense of group and personal identity in the New World and how the immigrant church often became the focus of group consciousness and activity. As Father Barry indicated, this was certainly the case for German Catholic immigrants. The Lutheran historians E. Clifford Nelson and Eugene L. Fevold have shown how the various synods formed by Lutheran immigrant groups in the nineteenth century, including the Germans, eased the immigrant's adjustment to a new social and physical environment, how they struggled to preserve cultural patterns and particular doctrines, and how they assiduously avoided what they perceived as the corrupting influence of the fully Americanized Lutheran church — established in Colonial times by German and Swedish immigrants. Father Barry implies that the German Catholics were, for the most part, unified through nationality, language, and religious practice. Such was not the case for German Lutherans, however, because they brought with them no one strong unifying factor from the Old World, such as the papacy; yet they also, upon arriving in the New World, sought to transplant regional and congregational peculiarities in doctrine and practice. In America synods were established first on the basis of nationality and then (within the nationality) on the basis of theology, religious attitude, and custom. As a result, between 1840 and 1875 some 60 independent Lutheran bodies competed for the immigrants' loyalty.

As with the Catholics, religious difficulties caused the Lutherans to flee the German states as early as the late eighteenth century. The Union Agenda of 1830, which required Lutherans and Reformed Protestants to use the same liturgy and declared the sacrament of Holy Communion as merely symbolic, added to the growing stream of emigrants.

Again paralleling the German Catholic experience, the establishment of parochial schools was an immediate concern of German Lutherans. Missouri Synod Lutherans in particular viewed the school as the center of their language retention effort and the true repository of German culture. Parochial schools and the German-language services served to isolate German-Lutherans from the Americanizing efforts of non-Lutherans and previously assimilated Lutherans alike. Furthermore, the German language as used in church and school was considered necessary for the preservation of doctrinal purity. The First World War and consequent pressure from an all-out Americanization movement forced the adoption of the English language in all but a few churches — and the virtual disappearance of German as a medium of instruction. The transition to English services was commonly made by offering a choice of German or English services on the same Sunday, on alternate Sundays, or once a month. Despite the increasingly common use of English, however, German and Scandinavian groups generally preferred translations of their own liturgies and held on to certain liturgical customs. Even recently, when the three major Lutheran bodies in the United States collaborated on the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, hymn selection kept in mind these preferences and ties to late nineteenth century national and synodical affiliations.

The history of American Lutheranism, like Catholicism, is characterized by unification in the face of national group rivalries and divisions within the national groups. Many Lutheran leaders regarded such rivalries and divisions, especially when based on national and language differences, as embarrassments and detriments to the future of Lutheranism in America. Abdel Ross Wentz, in true ethnocentric fashion, emphasized in his *Basic History of Lutheranism in America* that the Lutheran church as an institution in America is as old as the nation itself and more American than German. In discussing the merger of four bodies (two Norwegian, one German, and one Danish) into the American Lutheran church in 1960 and 1962, he states: "It was the first major breakthrough of Lutheran bodies across the lines of national origin . . . . To the student of history this seems clearly to point to the eventual disappearance of all vestiges of historical variety and tradition among the Lutherans of America. It is a harbinger of Lutheran solidarity and ecumenism in America in response to an age of pluralism."[1] This was one of two large mergers in the Lutheran church, the other being the formation of the Lutheran Church in America out of colonial American groups and Swedish, Danish, Finnish, and German bodies in 1963. It should be noted that these two major mergers were the culmination of nearly 100 years of work in effecting smaller mergers, usually within national groups. One of the early Lutheran

bodies to be formed in the nineteenth century, the Missouri Synod (or Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod), has consistently resisted merging with other Lutheran groups. Wentz acknowledges that the bonds of nationality and language which the Missouri Synod shared with other German synods was not sufficient to bring it into union with the other groups. The theological ramparts which the Missouri Synod established in the late nineteenth century over the issues of excommunication, millenialism, and the social gospel are now buttressed with conservative viewpoints on Biblical interpretation, women in the pastorate, ecumenism, authority structure, and forms of worship. Many in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod regard this conservatism to be in keeping with Lutheran doctrine as established by the German church fathers. The Catholics of German origin are not, to my knowledge, divided in this same way.

Catholic and Lutheran Experiences Similar

In summary, then, a comparison of German Catholic and German Lutheran experience in America reveals several similarities in those experiences. Each religion provided a sense of identity for the immigrants and offered them a center for community activity. Both groups emigrated, at least in part, because of religious obstacles in the Old World. Both placed high priority on the building of churches and schools once they started settlements in the New World. Both sought to retain the German language and viewed it as necessary to the sustenance of their faith. Both were faced with internal and external pressures to Americanize as rapidly as possible. And, finally, both groups were urged from within to unite with other national groups by adopting the English language and uniform liturgical customs.

The second aspect of Father Barry's paper which I would like to address concerns the concept of ethnicity and what Father Barry calls "the spirit of German Catholicism as practiced by American citizens of German origin," which, he feels, remained in parishes for some time even after assimilation seemed complete. Father Barry is not explicit about what he means by this phrase, nor does he give examples of how the spirit was expressed. He also does not indicate if he believes it still exists. Father Barry implies, however, that German Catholic traditions such as congregational singing, Scripture-centered life, and certain arts and crafts have been lost and that this is a direct result of rapid assimilation.

I would agree that assimilation is probably one factor contributing to the loss of those traditions. But I would also say that the immigrant experience includes not only the transplanting of Old World traditions but also their transformation and the formation of new

This appears to be a confirmation class in a German Lutheran church.

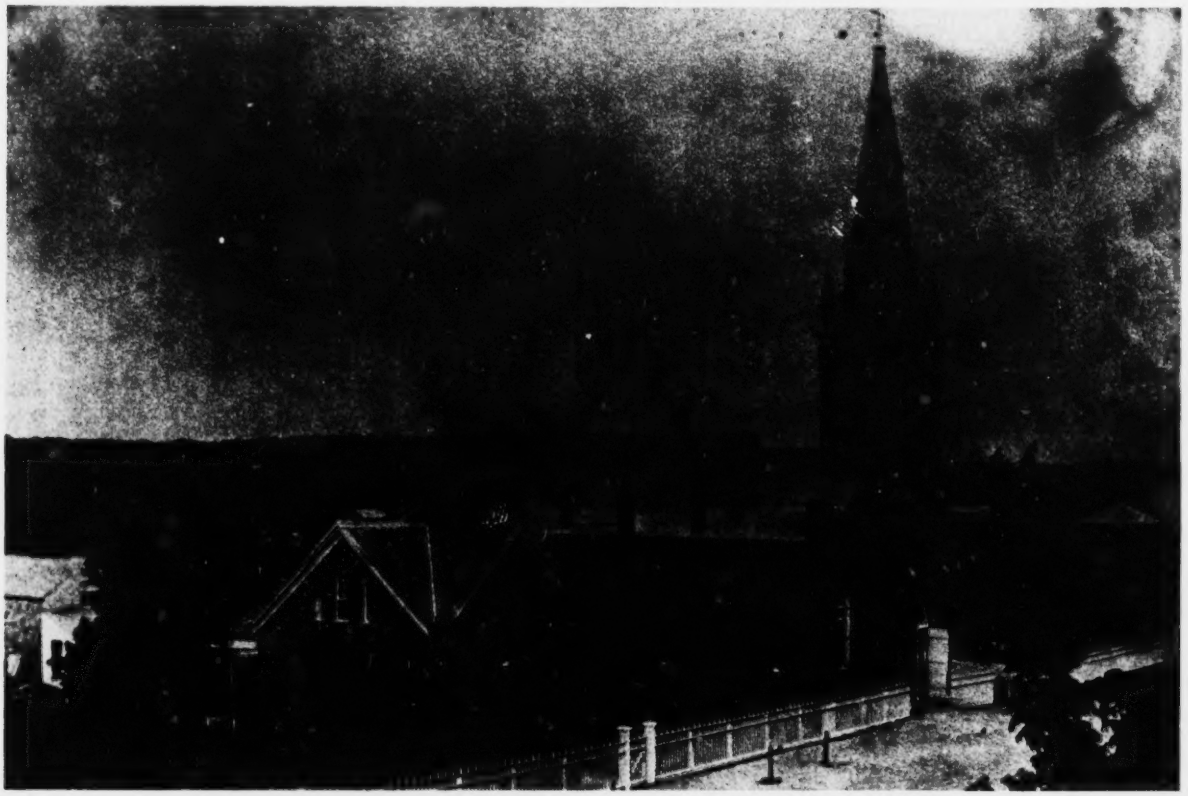
traditions. Certainly a revival of the German Catholic traditions as known by the immigrants and as first practiced in America might be considered important by some parishes and dioceses. But I feel that "the spirit of German Catholicism as practiced by American citizens of German origin" — today, in both rural and urban parishes — is still worthy of study. This spirit could well be identified as ethnicity, as Rudolph Vecoli defines it: "group consciousness based on a sense of common origin."[2]

Andrew Greeley has done pioneering work in discovering how Catholics of various national backgrounds express their Catholicism and their national heritage. Greeley does not believe that the melting pot did its work on Catholics as a whole and that parish customs and individual decisions are often based on a consciousness of group or personal origin.

Martin Marty has shown how ethnicity can be viewed as either a skeleton in the closet — i.e., an embarrassment in the American environment — or as a skeletal framework for religion in America today. The concept of ethnicity as a skeletal framework is certainly useful in attempting to explain the variety of religious expression found within parishes and among individuals in religious institutions such as the Catholic or the Lutheran church, which are structurally large and serve to unite believers in many common expressions. It is important, however, in trying to locate ethnicity as a skeletal framework, that one not concentrate on searching only for such things as language retention and foodways, although these things may be part of that existing framework. Likewise, because traditions in the transplantation process were usually either transformed or abandoned, one should not go to the Old World to search for traditions and then expect to find them in America in a pure form. Just as certain farming techniques had to be adapted or forgotton, so too did liturgical forms. The ways in which succeeding generations altered and adapted traditions and the current absence or changed expression of the old ways — these are the areas that need to be studied to discover how German-Catholics or German-Lutherans (or any other national religious groups) maintain the spirit of their ethno-religious heritage. Such a study is, of course, based on the assumption that ethnicity is a framework for religious pluralism, and that people do continue to possess a group consciousness based on some sort of common origin — historic, national, religious, or racial.

Historical inquiry has led Charles K. Piehl of Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska, to the conclusion that Missouri Synod Lutherans are an ethnic group — not by virtue of language retention, foodways, or any obvious German way, but rather through a consistent pattern of doctrinal and liturgical conservatism based on beliefs about the nature of Lutheranism as taught by Luther and their Saxon forefathers, particularly C. F. W. Walther. The actual ways in which this pattern of conservatism is expressed would seem to constitute the spirit of Missouri Synod Lutheranism.

How might one go about studying ethnicity or the spirit of Missouri Synod Lutheranism, German-American Lutheranism, or German-American



The First Church and Parsonage of the Holy Trinity parish, New Ulm, ca. 1880s.

Catholicism? I would suggest that the methods of documentation and analysis used in folklore studies, and the perspective of the folklorist who studies human behavior, are appropriate to this problem; and that the folklorist's approach will yield information on how Catholics or Lutherans of German origin express their origin. Folkloristics is the study of continuities and consistencies in human behavior through time and space. The folklorist is interested in studying how groups attempt to live the present through their interpretation of the past, and how they traditionalize behavior based on their beliefs about the past. One must therefore look for continuities and consistencies in behavior which make statements about beliefs and values related to the past and operative in the present.

Folklorists Study Communities

How would the folklorist go about such a study? First of all, a community or several communities must be identified as being likely to have a German heritage. In Minnesota several such communities come immediately to mind: the many small towns in Stearns, Brown, and Carver counties, for instance, as well as the Frogtown area of St. Paul. Secondly, the folkorist must identify individuals within the community who might be good informants and representative of the community. These could include the pastor or priest, older members of the parish, elders or deacons, other lay leaders, musicians, and teachers. Thirdly, the folklorist must survey the church records, including histories and commemorative booklets; baptismal, marriage, and burial records; minutes of congregation and lay organization meetings; service sheets; newsletters, church papers, advertisements, and general letters to the congregation. A survey of these records, as well as a knowledge of the history of the congregation and its parent bodies in the past and present, should provide the folklorist with a focus for the oral interviewing, the next step in the study. Finally, analysis of the interviews should concentrate on the patterns of continuity and consistency which emerge through time and space. The folklorist must be aware that popular images of Germanness will probably not stand out because of the nature of the immigrant experience and the assimilation process. But if the folklorist finds that this community identifies itself, consciously or unconsciously, as German, we can say that the continuities and consistencies which arise from the documentation are expressions of that group's sense of common origin.

My personal research and observations of Lutherans indicates that ethnicity among Lutherans of German descent is not wholly dependent on usage of a mother tongue, although continued use of the German language may be important for some individuals. In addition, some expressions of ethnicity are likely to be unconscious and will include more than preferring certain hymns, celebrating Reformation Sunday, and observing Old World customs for confirmation. Where such traditions are absent, or expressed only for the benefit of a few, or so Anglicized as to appear American, there may still be an ethos that pervades the religious community and finds its expression in subtle ways of thinking and doing, in communal ties, and in a sense of having primordial roots in the community.

Should I or Father Barry ever have the opportunity to study our respective groups from the folklorist's perspective, several significant changes could occur. First of all, our findings would raise the consciousness of the informants and of other group members, giving them an opportunity to identify with their immigrant heritage and hopefully to value it more fully.

Secondly, the findings would encourage other researchers to look for ethnic qualities within other communities of the same or different religious persuasion. A virtual flood of such case studies would put Will Herberg's triple melting pot theory — Protestant, Catholic, Jew — to rest forever.

Thirdly, the most important contribution to our findings would be support for a conception of a united church body that does not preclude recognition and encouragement of differences which find their source in traditional values and beliefs. The Lutheran church, for instance, as an immigrant church owes much of its present character to the immigrant experience and to the traditions those immigrants brought to America. The Lutheran church as it has developed and is developing in America is much like the whole of American society, as portrayed by Rudolph Vecoli: "a complex variety of racial, religious, and cultural groups living together in conflict and concord."[3] Recognizing this, those who write the history of Lutherans and Catholics in America, or who interpret their behavior today, are compelled to give ethnicity and traditional expressions of belief and value the attention they demand and deserve. They will no longer mourn the loss of heritage, but treasure it in its new and varied expression.

Diana M. Rankin received her Master of Music degree from Mankato State University and an M.A. in American Studies from the University of Minnesota. Her research has centered on Hutterite hymnsinging and the religious music and life of other German Americans, particularly Lutherans and Mennonites. She has wide experience as a church musician, was coordinator for the Minnesota Folklife Center's Spring Hill Conference, and is president of the Minnesota Folklife Society. Through the St. Paul, Minnesota, Public Schools and her church, she is active in multicultural education and the resettlement of Indochinese refugees. Her research and volunteer activities reflect her general interest in ethnicity and intercultural understanding.

Notes

[1]Abdel Ross Wentz, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 378.

[2]Rudolph Vecoli, "Ethnicity: A Neglected Dimension of American History," in *The State of American History*, ed. H. J. Bass (1970), p. 70.

[3]Vecoli, p. 84.

Albert Scheffer with Marie Dreis Scheffer and Ilma Scheffer.

Part IV.
Politics and Education of German-Americans in Minnesota

Once again the papers concentrate on the first of the two topics mentioned in the title, on politics instead of education. Although Chrislock, Cofell, and Noblitt have each spent several decades in the classroom — and Cofell is a professor of education — they address themselves primarily to the political stance and involvement of the German-Americans in Minnesota. The formal and informal education of these people may be implied in their remarks, but it is seldom addressed directly.

Following Professor Chrislock's lead, these papers take off from the assumption that the political involvement of Minnesota's German-Americans — and consequently their influence — has been much less than other immigrant groups. They submit hypotheses to explain the party affiliations and voting patterns of the German-Americans. When their vote shifted from one party to another, they inquire into the forces that motivated the change. And they look very closely at county and township records.

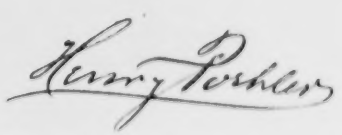
Chrislock, Cofell, and Noblitt are in nearly complete agreement on their findings and conclusions. Although their disciplines are various — history, sociology-psychology, and political science — these men are of the same generation and have been acquainted for some time. For three decades Professor Chrislock has investigated Minnesota immigration and politics. Although his own immigrant background and area of expertise has been Norwegian rather than German, Chrislock has a thorough-going knowledge of immigration patterns and problems, and the economic, social, and cultural factors that were involved. He is even better known for his study of Minnesota politics, *The Progressive Era in Minnesota, 1899-1918*. His research convinced him that German-Americans were less ready to follow insurgent movements than the Scandinavian immigrants and their descendants. He discovered, also, that when German-Americans made common cause with agrarian and labor groups, their motivation was unusual: ethnic and idealogical, not economic.

In large part, Professors Cofell and Noblitt reinforce Chrislock's assertions from very considerable political involvement and investigation of their own. Both of them suggest new aspects of the topic that remain to be researched, despite Chrislock's wide-ranging study. And each of them adds information and insights to support the view of German-American political posture that they share with Chrislock.

Kathleen Conzen has no quarrel with Chrislock's findings and assertions but carries them forward and derives new insights from them. German-American political loyalties were motivated "by local rather than national factors," and "ethnicity, religion, and moral beliefs rather than strict economic self-interest have tended to define those local issues." Conzen concludes:

> Only a closer examination of local politics can really uncover German political efficacy. The Irish used politics for jobs and status, the Germans for cultural defense. To measure them against a common standard of achievement, with the resulting stereotype of German political weakness, is almost irrelevant.

Finally Conzen argues that closer attention to German rural areas in the Midwest may uncover "a more complex process of ethnic survival and evolution" than presently accepted, and that such investigations may alter our perceptions of German assimilation.



Henry Poehler, state legislator, Henderson, 1858, 1865, 1872-3, 1876-77; congressman, 1879-81.

The German-American Role in Minnesota Politics, 1850-1950

by Carl H. Chrislock

There is an apparent disparity between the numerical strength of the German element within Minnesota's population and the relatively few Germanic names on the rosters of state governors and United States senators. Nevertheless, there has been a German presence in Minnesota politics ever since the 1850s. William Noot and Ferdinand Knauft, both natives of Prussia, served in the territorial assembly, Noot in 1854 and Knauft in 1857.[1] A century and a quarter later Rudy Boschwitz, another German native, and David Durenberger, a Minnesota-born German-American, won election to the United States Senate. Between the 1850s and 1970s one also encounters many prominent politicians of German birth or background: Charles Scheffer, William Pfaender, Henry Poehler, Albert Scheffer, Andrew Kiefer, Henry Keller, Julius Schmahl, Henry Arens, and Eugene McCarthy, to name a few. Possible McCarthy's name obscures his half-German ancestral background and the German Benedictine influences that shaped his career. The other names may not evoke instant recognition either, but collectively they symbolize an ongoing German-Amercian role in the political history of Minnesota.

Minnesota gained territorial status in 1849 and statehood in 1858. Notwithstanding the Whig affiliation of its first governor, Alexander Ramsey, the new territory was solidly Democratic in orientation and would remain so for the first six years of its existence. In the mid-1850s this pattern began to change. Passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, a measure which infuriated the opponents of slavery extension, and a growing dissatisfaction with other policies of the Pierce and Buchanan administration led to the emergence of an aggressive, self-confident Republican Party, committed to the non-extension of slavery (but not its immediate abolition), free homesteads, and a broad program of federally-financed internal improvements.

In Minnesota the new party discovered a ready-made constituency. The extent to which the territory's people opposed slavery on moral grounds has sometimes been exaggerated; but transplanted New Englanders had brought with them a strong antipathy to the "peculiar institution," and nearly all Minnesota citizens perceived the extension of slavery as contrary to their interests. Equally if not more important, farmers, would-be farmers, and land speculators hungered both for free homesteads and generous federal grants to assist railroad construction. A crucial question was whether the Republicans could win substantial support within the territory's rapidly expanding immigrant communities.[2] Historically the Democratic Party had enjoyed the reputation of being more hospitable to the immigrant than either the Federalists or the Whigs, both of whom were nativist in tendency. The Republican Party was more than a reincarnation of the Federalist-Whig tradition but could scarcely avoid identification with it. Moreover, a number of former Know-Nothing luminaries were now prominent Republicans, a circumstance raising suspicions that the new party was hostile to immigrants, particularly to those of Catholic persuasion.

Notwithstanding these handicaps, the Republicans' quest for immigrant support enjoyed a degree of success. Scandinavians, whose Protestantism removed them from the direct line of Know-Nothing fire and whose values did not clash fundamentally with those cherished by Yankee Republicans, flocked into the new party in large numbers. Many liberal, Turner-oriented Germans also embraced Republicanism. They may have disliked the Republican tendency to crusade for sumptuary legislation, but the new party's reformist image appealed to these heirs of the abortive German Revolution of 1848.

Other Germans, especially the Catholics, demonstrated less enthusiasm for the Republican Party. One can safely assume that they were reacting adversely to the condemnations of "foreign ecclesiastical tyranny" and demands for the "enactment and enforcement of a Prohibitory Liquor Law" appearing in early Republican platforms and manifestos. The Republican stand against the extension of slavery and in favor of homestead legislation was undoubtedly agreeable, but not agreeable enough to overcome fears that the rampant nativism of the 40s and 50s might stage a reappearance.[3]

The campaign of 1857, the first state-wide contest held under the new constitution, culminated in a narrow Democratic victory: Henry H. Sibley, the Democratic candidate for governor, triumphed over Alexander Ramsey, the Republican contender, by a margin of 240 votes. Two years later Republican managers launched a determined effort to capture Irish and German support. Among other things, they circulated campaign literature printed in German, recruited Carl Schurz as a campaign orator, adopted a platform proclaiming sensitivity to immigrant interests, nominated Charles Scheffer ("an amiable German banker") for state treasurer, and pointed up the friendliness of Alexander Ramsey, who again headed the ticket, to the German community.[4]

Ignatius Donnelly, the Republican candidate for lieutenant-governor, also gave high priority to the immigrant vote. A former Democrat recently converted to Republicanism, and Irish-Catholic by background although not a practicing Catholic, Donnelly already had established a special relationship with Minnesota Germans. A year earlier, when

running for the legislature from Dakota County, he published an article titled *An die Deutschen von Minnesota* in the *Minnesota Staats-Zeitung*, an article urging Germans who had come to the United States in the spirit of 1848 to recognize the immorality of slavery and affiliate with the Republican Party, which, contrary to a widespread impression, was not hostile to the German immigrant. This argument failed to persuade all *Staats-Zeitung* readers, but according to his biographer the article "won Donnelly many lasting friends."[5]

Returns for the 1859 election registered a Republican victory by a majority of more than 4,000 votes in a total of nearly 39,000. However, the Republican effort to capture the German vote was only partially successful. Brown County, a center of Turner influence which had returned a Democratic majority in 1857, favored the Republicans by a vote of 343 to 300, but Carver, Le Sueur, Nicollet, Ramsey, Scott, Sibley, and Stearns remained in the Democratic fold.[6] Whether this result is attributable primarily to the German vote requires careful analysis, but all of the counties enumerated were heavily populated by German settlers.

National Campaign of 1860

As one might expect, the 1859 race was a prelude to the national campaign of 1860 — the famous four-party contest in which Abraham Lincoln, Stephen A. Douglas, John C. Breckenridge, and John Bell vied for the Presidency. Again the Republicans organized a strong effort to gain immigrant support, an effort backed by national party leaders who perceived the Midwest as crucial to Lincoln's success. The German sector received special attention. Republican campaign committees printed and circulated German pamphlets, subsidized German-language newspapers, recruited German-speaking orators (Carl Schurz paid a return visit), sponsored debates, and organized rallies preceded by elaborate parades. The election outcome appeared to reward this expenditure of energy. Lincoln carried the state with a vote of 22,076 to 11,922 for Douglas, 774 for Breckenridge, and 53 for Bell. Douglas carried five counties: Houston, Morrison, Otter Tail, Scott, and Stearns. The remaining 37 returned Lincoln majorities or pluralities.[7]

The fact that two of the Douglas counties, Scott and Stearns, were German population centers raises the possibility that the Republican quest for German votes was not completely successful. However, an excellent study of the problem of how Minnesota Germans voted in 1860 by Hildegard Binder Johnson concludes that a majority did indeed favor Lincoln. The scanty evidence available suggests that German Catholics may have preferred Douglas, but Lutherans and free-thinkers chose Lincoln, the free-thinkers by an overwhelming margin. Professor Johnson also points out that the 1860 Democratic vote in Scott and Stearns was considerably diminished from 1859, and that other counties of high German population concentration which had voted Democratic in the earlier year returned majorities or pluralities for Lincoln.[8]

Professor Johnson's study does not go beyond the Lincoln-Douglas contest, but it is clear that the 1860 election failed to signal a long-term Republican trend within Minnesota's German community. In subsequent contests both on the Presidential and gubernatorial levels, such counties as Carver, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott, Sibley, and Stearns generally reaffirmed their initial Democratic preference, with Scott and Stearns often doing so by a ratio of two or three to one. From the late 1870s and through the 80s this trend became more pronounced. Brown County, which voted Republican in every Presidential election from 1860 through 1880, returned Democratic pluralities in 1884, 1888, and 1892.[9] Meanwhile the state as a whole remained firmly Republican; Minnesota did not cast its electoral vote for a Democrat until 1932, when Franklin D. Roosevelt prevailed over Herbert Hoover.

Economic issues generated by agriculture's depressed plight were not primarily responsible for the pro-Democratic tilt of the Minnesota and Midwest German-American communities in the 1880s. Farmers generally were becoming disillusioned with what they perceived as Republican insensitivity to their problems, but the conservative orientation of the pre-Bryan Democratic leadership was no more reassuring. However, on the ethno-cultural level there appeared to be a difference between the two major parties. Nearly everyone recalls the impolitic and unauthorized statement by a Republican speaker (in the Blaine-Cleveland Presidential campaign of 1884) characterizing the Democrats as a party of "Rum, Romanism and Rebellion." Responsible Republican leaders deplored such rhetorical extravagence, but the characterization authentically interpreted a widespread Protestant Republican image of the opposition party.

Democratic spokespersons responded with stereotypes of their own. Daniel W. Lawler (1859-1926), a Minnesota Democratic leader who entered politics in the late 1880s, perfected a standard speech for German audiences. Among other things this speech often delivered in German, a language which Lawler, an Irish-American, had mastered — extolled "personal liberty" as a worthy doctrine to which the Democratic Party was committed, and roundly condemned Republicanism's "blue-nose" tendencies. In the context of the time, "personal liberty" did not refer as specifically to the guarantees in the Bill of Rights as to the impropriety of state and federal intrusion into areas served by ethnic institutions — in other words, the liberty to pursue a German life-style.[10]

The threat of such intrusion appeared to be rising in the 1880s. Most important, the dry movement was gathering force, a reality underscored by an impressive increase in the state-wide vote polled by the Prohibition Party. Many Republican politicans resisted full commitment to the dry cause, but pressure from their constituencies dictated at least a minimal response. The Republican state platform of 1886 endorsed the "high license" principle, the main goal of which was to reduce the number of saloons throughout the state, while the Democrats "declared against all sumptuary legislation," a position eminently agreeable to proponents of personal liberty. Following a campaign in which the liquor issue held highest priority, with the Republican candidate for governor strongly supporting high license, the Republicans won a narrow victory and the 1887 legislature enacted high license into law.[11]

The School Question

The so-called school question also agitated Midwest politics in the late 1880s and early 1890s. The immediate issue was not so much the existence of either parochial or public schools as the degree of state supervision which should be imposed on the parochial system. The issue became prominent after the 1889 Wisconsin legislature passed the "Bennett law," a measure raising the age of compulsory school attendance and requiring all schools, private and public, to employ English as the language of instruction in basic subjects. This legislative action provoked strong reaction against the law not only from German Catholics and Lutherans but also from Scandinavians. In the election of 1890 Wisconsin Democrats won a resounding victory largely on the promise that the law would be repealed.[12]

Minnesota observers followed the Wisconsin controversy with keen interest, and advocacy of a measure based on the Bennett model developed. However, most Republican politicans resisted commitment; the last elections had been too close to warrant the risks involved. Democratic leaders also responded reluctantly to demands that their party explicitly condemn the Bennett principle. Possibly they saw the issue as working for them already, so offending pro-Bennett voters otherwise disposed to vote Democratic seemed imprudent. Nevertheless, total suppression of the issue proved to be impossible. At the 1892 state Democratic convention one of the delegates, a Lutheran minister, introduced an amendment to the platform proclaiming opposition to "state interference with paternal rights and rights of conscience in the education of children." In arguing for his amendment, the clergyman-delegate promised that its adoption would induce thousands of normally Republican Lutherans to support the Democratic ticket. Although party leaders opposed the amendment, the convention adopted it.[13]

One suspects that the clergyman exaggerated the potential of his amendment: a few weeks earlier the Republicans had nominated Knute Nelson, a Norwegian Lutheran, as their candidate for governor. Moreover, in the arena of public discussion, economic issues rather than the school question and parental rights dominated the 1892 campaign. The three candidates for governor — Nelson, Democrat Daniel Lawler, and Populist Ignatius Donnelly — laid particular stress on their ability to restore agricultural prosperity, and Donnelly added a program for the massive reformation of American society. However, the ethno-cultural factor could not be excluded from a contest which pitted a Norwegian Lutheran against two Irish candidates who claimed to be special friends of the German community, the one a Catholic in good standing (Lawler) and the other of uncertain standing. Nelson won the election by a comparatively narrow plurality. Donnelly polled fewer votes than expected. Lawler, who trailed Nelson by less than 15,000 votes, ran an impressive race in the German counties.[14]

German-American political careers were not advanced by this strong German preoccupation with ethno-cultural issues, and a stand at odds with dominant Yankee and Scandinavian perspectives on these issues. Neither did the minority position of the Minnesota Democratic Party, which lost every statewide election from 1859 through 1896. Moreover, several segments of the German community lacked the motivation to become active politically. The Turners possessed both talent and ambition, but "liturgical" Germans (primarily Catholics and Lutherans), remembering their own unhappy experiences with anti-clerical German liberalism, spurned Turner leadership.[15] To the liturgicals, American freedom meant the right to nurture and practice their own branch of *Deutschtum* rather than the privilege of participating in a great democratic experiment which inevitably would redeem the world.[16] The duties of citizenship deserved serious attention, but a political career was not necessarily the noblest of all callings.

There was, however, a visible German presence within Minnesota's political establishment from the beginning of statehood. Francis Baasen, the first secretary of state, was a New Ulm German. The nomination and election of Charles Scheffer as state treasurer in 1859 established a traditional German claim to that post; Scheffer's successors included, among others, Emil Munch, William Seeger, William Pfaender, Joseph Bobleter, and August Koerner, all of them Republicans. After serving on the local and state legislative level, Henry Poehler, a Henderson merchant and Democratic activist, won election to congress in 1878. He served for one term, failing to win reelection in 1880. Andrew R. Kiefer of St. Paul, like Poehler a native of Germany but a Republican, served as 4th district congressman from 1893 to 1897. Several Germans also achieved prominence in the state legislature, most notably Henry Keller, a successful Stearns County entrepreneur, who for many years was an influential member of the state senate and a key figure in that body's Democratic caucus.[17]

Charles Scheffer, state treasurer, 1860-68.

Populism and Progressivism

In the quarter century between 1890 and the outbreak of World War I, two new forces became potent influences in American political life: Populism in the 1890s and Progressivism after the turn of the century. Historians have failed to reach a consensus with respect to the nature and effectiveness of either or both of these movements, or their relationship to each other. Nevertheless, a few broad generalizations are possible. It is certainly true that both movements contributed to a heightened public awareness of the excesses of corporate power, the imperfections which marred the nation's political processes, and the growing disparities between wealth and poverty. Both proposed government intervention as a cure for these various ills, thereby weakening the national commitment to laissez-faire. Several of their proposed programs became established public policy; whether these measures dealt creatively with the problems they were designed to solve is another question.

Historians also disagree in their analyses of the Populist-Progressive impact on the country's immigrant population, some arguing that both movements were essentially nativist in tendency and others maintaining the opposite view. A great deal depends on which immigrant group is within the focus of one's vision. It is clear, for example, that the political fortunes of Minnesota Scandinavians, whose ethnic values were in basic harmony with the reforming ethos of the period, advanced significantly from 1890 to 1914. In the early 1890s many Red River Valley Norwegians rallied to the support of the recently founded Minnesota People's (Populist) Party, finding in it a forum for the articulation of severe economic grievances and the realization of political ambitions. The nomination of Knute Nelson as governor in 1892 is attributable in part to Republican anxiety with respect to Scandinavian defections from the G.O.P. And, as is well known, Nelson was only the first in a succession of Scandinavian governors.[18]

The Populist era's impact on the political role of Minnesota Germans is less striking. However, one trend is clearly visible: a slackening of the traditionally strong party loyalty of German Democrats. In the 1896 McKinley-Bryan Presidential race many of them declined to vote for Bryan, the Democratic candidate, who also had formal Populist endorsement. Four years earlier, when Democrat Grover Cleveland had challenged the reelection of Republican Benjamin Harrison, Brown, Carver, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott, Sibley, Stearns, Wabasha, and Winona counties had registered pluralities or majorities for Cleveland. In 1896 all except Dakota, Scott and Stearns favored McKinley. The decline in the Democratic vote as a percentage of the two-party total in Scott and Stearns counties is also worth noting. In Scott the Democrats polled 71% of this total in 1892, but only 51% in 1896. The reduction in Stearns was less drastic but still significant, from 73% to 63%. For Minnesota as a whole, the decline was 5%, from 47% to 42%.

McKinley's capture of a substantial portion of the German Democratic vote did not necessarily signify a permanent gain for the Republican Party; in subsequent elections the German counties which had voted for him tended to reaffirm their traditional Democratic

William Pfaender, state legislator, New Ulm, 1859, 1870-72; state treasurer, 1876-80.

preference.[20] What the defection did indicate was a distrust of "Bryanism," a quasi-Populist doctrine which proposed a massive expansion of the money supply as a panacea for the nation's ills. Whether this distrust was rooted in economic self-interest or ethnic values is a provocative question. A striking fact about the 1896 Presidential contest in Minnesota is the degree to which McKinley ran a strong race in the state's relatively prosperous counties, a category embracing the most heavily German populated areas, and the extent of Bryan's appeal in the economically depressed Red River Valley. As a determinant of voting behavior in 1896, economic self-interest ranks as a highly important factor.[21]

Prohibition and the Plunderbund Charge

But it was not the only factor. Although the "Peerless Leader" had not yet adopted Prohibition as one of his causes, there was a basic tension between the moral (or moralistic) fervor of Bryanism and Populism on the one hand and the personal liberty ethos of the Minnesota German community on the other. Many if not most Minnesota Populists were outspoken drys who supported the imposition of severe curbs on the liquor industry; indeed, several were former members of the Prohibition Party. A number of reformers advocated a Populist-Prohibitionist merger, arguing that the two parties were working for very similar goals. This did not come about, chiefly because the Populists refused to commit their party to all-out Prohibition, but the two groups maintained a fellow-traveling relationship until Populism's demise in the late 1890s.[22]

After 1900 Progressivism — a broad, loose-

jointed reform movement supported by a coalition representing most sectors of Minnesota life — emerged as a dominant force in state politics. Its program included such goals as more effective regulation of transportion, utilities, banking, and insurance; a higher level of efficiency and professionalism in state and local government; tax reform; workmen's compensation; more adequate protection of money in political campaigns; and the direct primary. By 1908 an additional objective had been added: county option, an arrangement permitting the voters of each county to determine whether liquor licenses should be issued within that county.[23]

During Progressivism's first phase, Minnesota Germans responded positively to the movement and its leaders. In the Presidential election of 1904, Theodore Roosevelt carried every county in the state, including Scott and Stearns, which had voted Democratic in every Presidential race since statehood.[24] John A. Johnson, the state's famous Democratic reform governor, who held office from 1905 until his death in 1909, also enjoyed high favor in German Minnesota; his initial election and two subsequent reelections could not have been achieved without the strong support of the German counties.[25] However, addition of county option to the Progressive program — a step which Governor Johnson declined to endorse — created a complication. Theoretically county option was only one plank in an extensive reform program, but zealous Progressives tended to insist that it was an essential part of the whole, equating opposition to it with support of standpat reaction.

In a muckraking work published in 1911, Lynn Haines, a reform publicist, charged that all Progressive reform in Minnesota was being subverted by the "plunderbund," a tightly organized combine of "brewers and allied liquor forces . . . the United States Steel Corporation . . . the transportion trust . . . [and] a long list of such corporations as the Twin City Rapid Transportation Company."[26] So far, continued Haines, a compliant governor and legislature had permitted the "plunderbund" to have its way. He also identified those legislators who (in his view) were on the side of the angels and those allegedly in "plunderbund" service. Conspicuous among the latter were senators and representatives from the German counties.[27]

Haines did not specifically link the "plunderbund" to the state's German-American community, but his readers were free to draw their own conclusions. Moreover, German voting power was undoubtedly the single most important factor delaying the enactment of county option until 1915, a reality obvious to the most casual observer. To what extent this awareness generated anti-German sentiment, thereby intensifying the virulence of the wartime crusade against German culture, is an interesting question. Clearly it did not build up a reserve of good will.[28]

World War I and German-Americans

In September, 1914, several Minnesota German-language newspapers and their English-language subsidiaries reprinted an *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* editorial interpreting the European war (which had broken out on August 1) and defining German-America's relationship to it. According to the editorial, Germany now stood as a mighty fortress guarding the European continent against a menace from the East:

> While France fights to regain her German provinces, while England fights to regain her maritime supremacy, Germany defends herself against them with one hand, and with the other fights to preserve not only herself but France and England and the civilization of all western Europe from Slavic domination.

German-Americans, continued the *Staats-Zeitung*, could not evade the responsibilities thrust upon them by the exalted German mission. They should take the necessary action to make the situation clear to their American fellow citizens; there should be organization and propaganda; and American sympathy for the brave fellows who rush forth in close order, American help for those who fall wounded and helpless. American moral support when peace is negotiated will be the result.[29]

Whether they were familiar with the editorial or not, many Minnesota Germans accepted the *Staats-Zeitung*'s view. Up to American entry into the war the state's German-language newspapers persistently and consistently stressed two themes: Germany's cause was just and American neutrality was unbalanced. Fraternal societies arranged benefits in support of the German-Austro-Hungarian Red Cross, and cultural organizations arranged two speaking tours for Eugene Kuehnemann, a professor of German literature at Breslau and a one-time visiting professor at the University of Wisconsin. Minnesota congressmen came under strong pressure from German-American constituents to back such measures as a comprehensive arms embargo, and various groups organized mass peace rallies.[30]

In the light of subsequent history, it is easy to conclude that the German-American neutrality campaign of 1914-17 was tainted with sedition, but such a conclusion would be grossly unfair. For an American ethnic group to agitate and propagandize for a beleaguered homeland was (and is) a common if not universally approved practice. The situation changes if an adversary relationship develops between the homeland and the United States, but Germany and America were officially at peace until April 1917. Moreover, it is highly improbable that a commitment to Germany's imperial aims really motivated the neutrality campaign. As Carl Wittke points out, German-Americans had an overriding interest of their own to protect: a standing and status within American society which would be damaged by a German-American war. Hence it was necessary to do everything possible to prevent such a war.[31]

Prior to deterioration of relations between the United States and Germany, the German-American neutrality campaign encountered minimal criticism from Minnesota's non-Germans. After all, its central goal was what everyone professed to want: United States neutrality in the European war. The pattern changed somewhat in early 1915, largely as a consequence of the submarine issue. Well before the end of the year, a full-fledged "anti-hyphenist" crusade

was underway. Inspired by such prominent Americans as President Wilson, ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, and Elihu Root, this crusade questioned the patriotism of those who defined themselves as members of particular ethnic groups, and called for the liquidation of such identities as "German-Americans" in favor of a pure, undiluted "unhyphenated" Americanism.[32]

As might be expected, the hyphenism issue generated lively debate in Minnesota. Several influential newspapers joined the anti-hyphenist crusade, arguing that the pace of Americanization within the state was entirely too slow, urging the institution of programs that would encourage churches and cultural societies to adopt English as their language of communication, and implying that foreign-language newspapers had by now completed their mission. A *Minneapolis Journal* editorial of June 8, 1916, summed up the anti-hyphenist consensus by observing: "A people speaking one language are a unity; speaking two languages, they are a division. Americans in their optimism have felt they could ignore what no other nation could afford to ignore."[33]

This line of argument invited strong rebuttal not only from Minnesota Germans but from Scandinavians as well. Representatives of both groups often charged that Anglophilism rather than Americanism underlay anti-hyphenist agitation, a contention based on the alleged pro-British orientation of most anti-hyphenists on questions relating to the war, and on the assumption that a person who spoke English was inherently a better citizen than one who preferred another tongue. According to "pro-hyphenist" advocates, the United States was considerably more than an extension of Great Britain. It was rather a nation whose culture still was in process of formation; and until this process neared completion, all population groups within the country (with the possible exception of American Indians) were "hyphenates." A contributor to the letter columns of the *Minneapolis Journal* promised that German-Americans would abandon the hyphen when Anglo-Americans did so. Meanwhile, he added, "Let the exodus of Anglo-Americans start at once! Let all those people go who think that America is a new England."[34]

Wilson's 1916 Campaign

In the late summer and autumn of 1916, the exigencies of Presidential and senatorial politics temporarily muted anti-hyphenist zeal. On the Presidential level, Woodrow Wilson's bid for reelection was being challenged by Republican Charles Evans Hughes, and Frank B. Kellogg, the future secretary of state, was running a well-financed campaign for the senatorship. From a Minnesota Republican standpoint, two goals held top priority: a Kellogg victory and delivery of the state's electoral vote to Hughes. Of the two, the latter seemed more difficult. Politicans and journalists detected strong voter dissatisfaction with Wilson and his policies, but on issues relating to foreign policy, the President's opposition was split between interventionists who believed he had not demonstrated sufficient firmness in dealing with Germany and neutralists who felt that he had been too firm. Welding the two into a pro-Hughes coalition might appear to have been an impossible feat, but Republican managers attempted to do so.[35]

The outcome of the 1916 Presidential election indicates that in the end most of the nation's neutralists voted for Wilson, apparently believing that his interventionist impulse was less pronounced than the Republican candidate's. In Minnesota, too, many neutralists chose Wilson, including Scandinavians who never before had voted for a Democratic Presidential candidate. However, many German Democrats voted for Hughes: Stearns County went Republican by a 4 to 3 margin, and Brown, which had returned Democratic pluralities in 1908 and 1912, did so by nearly 2 to 1. Two factors help to explain this Hughes trend: a dislike of Wilson intense enough to overcome fears that Hughes might be dominated by pro-Allied associates, and the strong editorial support given both Hughes and Kellogg by the German-language press.[36]

Between Wilson's reelection on November 7, 1916, and his second inauguration on March 4, 1917, a succession of tragic events set the United States and Imperial Germany on a collision course culminating in the American declaration of war on April 6. By the end of December it became obvious that a Presidential peace offensive, the last of several, was getting nowhere: neither group of belligerents was willing to avow its war aims. On January 31, 1917, the German government informed Wilson of its intention to resume unrestricted submarine warfare, a practice which had been suspended since May of the preceding year in response to intense Wilsonian pressure. Within hours the American President severed diplomatic relations with Germany. Although many Americans assumed otherwise, this step did not mean inevitable, full-scale war. War nevertheless came; why it came is too complex a question to be explored here.

The course of events immediately before and after the declaration of war generated a mood bordering on hysteria within Minnesota's political establishment. Before adjourning in late April, the legislative session of 1917 enacted several laws that suggest a sense of impending disaster. The most important of these was the act setting up the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety, a seven-member body empowered

> to do all acts and things non-inconsistent with the constitution . . . which are necessary or proper for the public safety and . . . the protection of life and public property or private property of a character as in the judgment of the commission requires protection . . . .[37]

This was indeed a generous grant of power. As William Folwell puts it, "If a hostile army had already landed at Duluth and was about to march on the capital . . . a more liberal dictatorship could hardly have been conceded . . . .[38] One might add that no hostile armies subsequently appeared, none were expected, and the commission received no reports of German submarine activity on Lake Superior or the Mississippi River. However, political and business leaders perceived two other deadly perils: a rising tide of radicalism potentially dangerous not only to the war effort but also to the established economic order; and a large German-born population whose primary loyalty presumably resided in the European homeland.[39]

Radicalism Becomes an Issue

At best both perceptions were rooted in distorted half-truths. To be sure, radicalism had registered gains in the 1916 election. In North Dakota the Farmer's Nonpartisan League, an organization committed to state ownership of the middleman sector of the agricultural economy, had captured control of state government, and the League had begun an organizational campaign in Minnesota. Urban and working-class radicalism also appeared to be on the march. Minneapolis voters had chosen Thomas Van Lear, the city's most prominent Socialist, to serve as mayor, and on the Iron Range many middle-class citizens were involved in a crusade against the mining companies. Up to April 6, 1917, both the Nonpartisan League and the Van Lear circle had been strongly anti-war — a rather common point of view throughout the Midwest — but now they were accepting, albeit reluctantly, the necessity of fighting Germany.[40]

The second perception — that German-American sabotage of the war effort might be anticipated — was also based on a false sense of reality. Obviously German-Americans were psychologically unprepared for the conflict, but this did not mean disloyalty to the United States. Early in February, Julius Moersch, president of the Minnesota Union of the National German-American Alliance, issued to the local branches under his jurisdiction a statement that accurately anticipated his people's adjustment to the turn of events. "Our hearts may bleed and break," wrote Moersch, "but that does not relieve us from the necessity of fulfilling our duty to the land of our adoption." But Moersch was not ready to accept American involvement in the war as a great moral venture. "About the justice or injustice of the declaration of war, a higher power and the later history of the world will give judgment," he asserted, adding that "Germany never sought war with America."[41]

The Moersch statement reassured some observers, but it fell short of meeting the Safety Commission standard which proclaimed that "the test of loyalty in war times is whether a man is wholeheartedly for the war and subordinates everything else to its successful prosecution."[42] Moreover, some German-Americans assumed that constitutionally grounded rights were still in force. On July 25, 1917, advocates of an amendment to the draft law calling for the limitation of service in Europe to volunteers held a rally in New Ulm to build support for their proposal. All accounts indicate that the gathering was a model of order and propriety. No one threatened forcible resistance to the draft or any other action tinged with illegality. Nevertheless, painful repercussions followed. On recommendation of the Safety Commision two New Ulm officials and a college president, all three participants in the rally, were removed from their posts, the officials by Governor Joseph A. A. Burnquist and the college president by the governing board of his institution. The Safety Commission also initiated a New Ulm "Dedication Day" rally in honor of departing draftees: at this rally resolutions pledging unconditional submission to the draft and rejecting any criticism of it were enthusiastically acclaimed. Meanwhile, newspapers throughout the state vied with one another in denouncing New Ulm as a "traitor city." "Is it any wonder," queried the *Princeton Union*, "that there are those who regret the Sioux did not do a better job at New Ulm fifty-five years ago?"[43]

Before passions aroused by the New Ulm affair had subsided, Senator Robert M. La Follette unwittingly pushed the Nonpartisan League into the Safety Commission's line of fire. On September 20 the Wisconsin senator, who had gained considerable prominence as an opponent of the war resolution, addressed a session of a League-sponsored Producers' and Consumers' conference on the subject of financing the war. In the course of his speech, La Follette interjected a comment reminding his audience that he had not favored going to war, adding that he still believed the reasons for American entry were insubstantial. Within the context of the address as a whole, the interjected comment was parenthetical, but it branded the senator as a proponent of sedition and the Nonpartisan League as the state's major center of pro-German influence, thereby vitually guaranteeing that the so-called loyalty issue would dominate the electoral campaign of 1918, when the League was expected to make a strong bid for power in Minnesota.[44]

Germans and Nonpartisans — Fellow Victims

The cumulative effect of the events of 1917 was to cast the Minnesota German community and the Nonpartisan League in the role of fellow victims of the year's hysteria. Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the League encountered a friendly reception in German-populated areas. One of the movement's organizers recalled that initial recruiting "proceeded rapidly" in the old Populist counties of northwestern Minnesota, "but in southern Minnesota, which was largely populated by conservative and wealthy farmers of German descent, the organizers ran into a stone wall and were unable to get any appreciable number of members until war was declared in 1917." Thereafter, he added, the recruiting effort enjoyed considerable success.[45]

The extent to which Germans supported the Nonpartisan League was first tested in the state-wide primary of June 17, 1918. In March a League convention endorsed for governor former Congressman Charles A. Lindbergh, an implacable foe of the money trust and a strong opponent of American entry into the war before April 6, the understanding being that he would challenge the renomination of incumbent Governor Burnquist in the Republican primary. This Lindbergh proceeded to do, and the contest that followed was one of unparalleled bitterness. In accordance with the Nonpartisan League platform, Lindbergh pledged unstinting support of the war effort, arguing that the League program would facilitate early victory overseas. He also defended the maintenance of democratic liberties in wartime, attacking the Safety Commission for its repressive practices. The Burnquist campaign concentrated on one theme: the disloyalty of the Nonpartisan League as "proven" by its sponsorship of the September 20 La Follette speech. Given Burnquist's superior advantages — overwhelming press support, the patriotic

hysteria of the time, and the mob action which broke up more than one Lindbergh rally — it is probable that his message was more effectively communicated than Lindbergh's.[46]

Even so Lindbergh garnered three votes for every four polled by Burnquist.[47] Encouraged by this showing, the League leadership in collaboration with organized labor endorsed David H. Evans of Tracy, a more obscure but less controversial figure than Lindbergh, as a third-party candidate in the fall election. Evans gained access to the ballot through nomination by petition as the "Farmer-Labor" candidate — the first time this label was used (the Farmer-Labor party as such was not yet in existence). Late in the campaign Nonpartisan League newspapers also unofficially backed the candidacy of Willis G. Calderwood, who was contesting the reelection of Senator Knute Nelson. Calderwood, a life-long crusader for Prohibition, was not running primarily on the dry issue but on a platform that basically agreed with the Nonpartisan League programs and took exception to Nelson's brand of "loyalism." [48]

When allowance is made for the presence of a Democratic gubernatorial candidate on the November ballot, the fall election registered an outcome similar to that of the primary. Burnquist prevailed over Evans by a margin of approximately 55,000, the vote being: Burnquist, 166,618; Evans, 111,966; and Democrat Fred E. Wheaton, 76,838. In the senatorial race, Nelson polled 206,428 to Calderwood's 137,334 — a substantial Nelson majority, but not as large as had been expected.[49]

An analysis of the geographical distribution of the 1918 returns yields a number of interesting insights with respect to the German vote. Of the 21 counties carried by both Lindbergh and Evans, at least four (Brown, Carver, Sibley, and Stearns) were predominantly German and more or less Democratic by tradition; two others (Nicollet and Renville) had substantial German populations; and the remainder were mostly the old Populist counties of western and northwestern Minnesota. Burnquist triumphed over both Lindbergh and Evans in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, but in the fall election Evans carried St. Paul by an extremely narrow plurality. Calderwood carried nine counties, including Brown and Sibley; he also polled a substantial vote in Carver, Nicollet, and Scott.[50]

When the analysis is extended to the precinct level and account is taken of the various NPL handicaps in bidding for the German vote — Lindbergh's anti-Catholic image, the identification of Evans and Calderwood with the dry cause, and the prevailing notion that the League was a mortal enemy of small-town interests — the significance of the 1918 election is further illuminated. Undoubtedly Lindbergh's alleged anti-Catholicism, which was widely publicized on the eve of the primary, cost him support; nevertheless, he carried a number of German Catholic precincts in Stearns County by overwhelming majorities: St. Martin township, for example, gave him 120 votes to 23 for Burnquist.[51] Equally striking is the large German vote for Calderwood, the life-long Prohibitionist: in St. Martin he prevailed over Nelson by a vote of 75 to 49.[52] Nearly all villages and small cities in other areas of NPL strength favored Burnquist, but New Ulm, Chaska, Waconia, Norwood, Young America, and Jordan returned League majorities or pluralities in the primary or in the final election, or both.[53] Clearly an impulse to protest the pernicious loyalty crusade being waged by the Safety Commission against German self-respect and identity was a main factor in determining the voting behavior of Minnesota Germans in 1918.

The Farmer-Labor Party Emerges

The support of a substantial German-American voting bloc was one of the assets bequeathed by the Nonpartisan League to its heir and successor, the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party. In the state elections of 1922 and 1924, most of the German counties returned Farmer-Labor pluralities; and in the Coolidge-Davis-La Follette Presidential race of 1924, La Follette, the third-party candidate, carried virtually all of them, an outcome more attributable to wartime memories than to enthusiasm for the Wisconsin senator's economic program.[54] Several Minnesota Germans also achieved prominence within the Farmer-Labor Party, notably Henry Arens of Jordan, who later served as lieutenant-governor and congressman-at-large, and Dr. Louis A. Fritsche, the New Ulm mayor deposed by Governor Burnquist in 1917.[55]

By 1926 the solidarity of the German Farmer-Labor voting bloc was less impressive than earlier. Wartime memories were fading and the activities of the Farmer-Labor Left disturbed conservative German-American voters. For the next few years Minnesota politics was in a state of flux. In 1928 it seemed possible that the Minnesota Democratic Party, which had been moribund since 1916, might revive. The rise of Floyd B. Olson to Farmer-Labor leadership undermined this possibility. At the outset of his first successful campaign for governor (1930), Olson negotiated an arrangement with Minnesota Democratic leaders assuring him of only token Democratic opposition in his upcoming race. Olson won handily, as he would again in 1932 and 1934, and his tacit alliance with the Democratic Party was strengthened after Franklin D. Roosevelt became President. The political aspirations of John E. Regan, a conservative Democrat who won his party's gubernatorial nomination in 1932 and 1934, challenged but failed to disrupt the Roosevelt-Olson "axis." Although Regan attracted substantial support in German Catholic areas, he came out a poor third in both his bids for the governorship; and in 1936, the year of Olson's death, the New Deal-Farmer-Labor coalition scored an overwhelming victory in Minnesota.[56]

Like so many regimes installed by a landslide, the New Deal encountered serious political difficulties in the aftermath of Roosevelt's second inauguration. Many, perhaps most of the problems were domestic, but foreign policy also was intruding on the consciousness of many Americans. In 1937 full-scale war broke out between Japan and China, and in Europe Hitler's aggressive expansionism was threatening to precipitate another world war. Although the Roosevelt administration did not respond to these dangerous situations with an interventionist policy, the President proclaimed his dislike of the "aggressors," and to some observers White House rhetoric suggested a return to

Wilsonianism.

The administration of Minnesota's Farmer-Labor Governor Elmer A. Benson also felt the repercussions of the growing debate on American foreign policy. From its birth the Farmer-Labor party had been staunchly and uncompromisingly isolationist. Its official rhetoric still remained so, but by 1937 a number of its luminaries had become advocates of American aid to the beleagured Popular Front government of Spain, which was confronting a formidable "counter-revolutionary" revolt under the leadership of General Francisco Franco, backed by both Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Such advocacy had a double impact: it tarnished the party's isolationist image, an image conservative Republicans were gladly appropriating, and it reinforced a suspicion that Communists were in command of the Farmer-Labor organization.[57]

German-Americans were extremely sensitive to the foreign policy issues that surfaced in the late 1930s. With respect to Spain, Catholics received a clear message from their clergy: the Popular Front government was under Communist domination, and General Franco represented the values of Christian civilization. So far as Hitler was concerned, very few German-Americans sympathized with his cause, but the Roosevelt administration's hardening stance toward the Nazi regime posed the threat of another German-American war and a recurrence of the 1917-18 trauma.[58]

For or Against Franklin D. Roosevelt

Although there is no way of measuring the effect of these concerns on the political orientation of Minnesota Germans, a comparison of the voting behavior of the counties of Stearns and Kandiyohi is suggestive. These counties are in many respects similar, except that Kandiyohi is predominantly Scandinavian and Stearns German. In the 1936 election both strongly backed the Farmer-Labor candidate for governor, the percentage being 69% in Kandiyohi and 60% in Stearns. Both registered substantial declines in the Farmer-Labor percentage in 1938: Kandiyohi 19% and Stearns 35%. In the state as a whole, the fall in the Farmer-Labor vote was 27%, that is, from 61% to 34%. Thus, the decline of Farmer-Labor support was greater in Stearns than statewide and substantially higher than in Kandiyohi. It is safe to assume that issues relating to the Spanish Civil War, Communism, and/or isolationism were in part responsible.[59]

A comparison of President Roosevelt's political fortunes within the two counties in 1936 and 1940 discloses a similar pattern. In 1936 he polled 69% of the Kandiyohi vote; four years later his percentage declined to 62%, a loss of 7%. The erosion of Roosevelt support in Stearns was significantly higher: from 57% in 1936 to 37% in 1940, a decline of 20%. Roosevelt carried Minnesota in both elections, but by a considerably smaller margin in 1940: in 1936 he polled 62% of the vote; in 1940, 52%.[62]

The Minnesota German community's strong pro-Republican stance of 1938 and 1940 continued through the World War II years. This is not surprising. Although German-Americans unreservedly accepted the necessity of prosecuting the war, lingering suspicions that President Roosevelt had plunged the nation into a war not vital to the country's security persisted. In addition, German-Americans tended to distrust both the British and Soviet connections, and FDR's "One World" idealism evoked unpleasant memories of Woodrow Wilson and his ill-fated crusade. If these attitudes clouded Democratic (and Farmer-Labor) prospects within the state's German counties, Republicans espousing "One World" standpoints also received a cool reception. In the 1942 race for United States senator, many Brown, Carver, Sibley, and Stearns county voters declined to back the reelection of Senator Joseph H. Ball, a fervent Republican internationalist, choosing instead to cast their ballots for Martin A. Nelson, a conservative Republican of presumed isolationist leanings, who was running on an "Independent Progressive" ticket.[61]

Fortunately, the stupid loyalty crusade of 1917-18 did not reappear in World War II: the contrast between the German- and Japanese-American experience on this score is instructive. Individual German-Americans may have suffered petty discrimination, and certainly the wartime propaganda theme stressing ineradicable "flaws" in the German character inflicted deep wounds, but politicans fastidiously avoided impugning the good faith and loyalty of German-Americans as an ethnic group.

Perhaps this forbearance facilitated the return of many German-American voters to the Democratic Party in 1948. In any case, such a return is evident. In the Presidential race of that year, Harry Truman carried Scott and Stearns counties, neither of which had voted for Roosevelt in 1940 and 1944, and Republican margins in Brown and Sibley were considerably smaller than in the two preceding elections. Hubert Humphrey, who ran his first senate race in 1948, also carried Scott and Stearns; and in the 6th congressional district Stearns contributed substantially to the victory of Fred Marshall, the DFL contender, by deserting Harold Knutson, a Republican conservative who enjoyed (or suffered) the reputation of being the congressional delegation's arch isolationist.[62] In subsequent elections the Korean war temporarily revived the war issue to the detriment of the Democrats, but a cohesive German voting bloc was considerably less visible than earlier.[63]

Thus it appears that the end of World War II forecast the termination of a clearly definable, distinctive German-American role in Minnesota politics. For decades two vital ethnic interests had sustained such a role: protecting a set of values and a style of life menaced by hostile legislation; and defending German self-respect and identity against allegations that German civilization was fundamentally barbaric and brutish. By 1950 both threats were receding. In the perception of most Americans, Germany had ceased to be a "devil nation" and the West German Republic was moving toward membership in the Western Alliance. Prohibition was an absolutely forlorn cause, and the German life-style, far from being under attack, was now widely admired and imitated. To be sure, ethnically derived values continued to influence the voting behavior of individuals, and candidates bearing a German name might enjoy a slight advantage in bidding for German votes, but the high-priority political issues were no longer uniquely "German."

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Notes

[1]Edward D. Neill, *The History of Minnesota from the Earliest French Explorations to the Present Time* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1858), pp. 593, 617.

[2]In 1860 the foreign-born constituted 29.2% of Minnesota's population. Germans were the most numerous with a total of 18,400. There were 12,831 Irish, 8,425 Norwegians, 8,023 British Americans, and 3,178 Swedes: Theodore C. Blegen, *Minnesota: A History of the State* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963), p. 175.

[3]Blegen, p. 217; see Rhoda R. Gilman, *Minnesota: Political Maverick* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1975) for citations from early Republican manifestos, p. 8.

[4]Martin Ridge, *Ignatius Donnelly: The Portrait of a Politician* (Chicago: Uiversity of Chicago, 1962), pp. 31-42; Hildegard Binder Johnson, "The Election of 1860 and the Germans in Minnesota," *Minnesota History*, 28 (March, 1947), 92-100. Reprinted in Frederick C. Luebke, ed., *Ethnic Voters and the Elections of Lincoln* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1971).

[5]Ridge, p. 31.

[6]Bruce M. White, et al., comps., *Minnesota Votes: Election Returns by County for Presidents, Congressmen, and Governors, 1857-1976* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1977), pp. 153-54.

[7]Ridge, pp. 50-53; Johnson, pp. 100-03; *Minnesota Votes*, p. 11.

[8]Johnson, pp. 104-09.

[9]*Minnesota Votes*, pp. 11-15, 154-66.

[10]J. F. Rosenwald to Knute Nelson, Oct. 28, 1912, Knute Nelson Papers in the Minnesota Historical Society.

[11]William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1921-1930), III, 172-73, 175.

[12]Richard N. Current, *Wisconsin: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), pp. 52-53.

[13]*Minneapolis Journal*, Aug. 4, 1892, p. 1.

[14]*Minnesota Votes*, pp. 167-68; Ridge, pp. 302-09.

[15]In a brochure prepared for circulation in Germany and Austria, Father Francis X. Pierz, the Slovenian priest who did so much to promote German immigration to the St. Cloud area, advised his readers to come to Minnesota and "bear out the opinion that Germans prove to be the best farmers and the best Christians in America." He also advised against bringing along "any freethinkers, red republicans, atheists or agitators." Quoted by William P. Furlan, "Diocese of Saint Cloud," in Patrick H. Ahern, ed., *Catholic Heritage in Minnesota, North Dakota, Saint Cloud* (St. Paul: Archbishop and Bishops, Province of St. Paul, 1964), p. 43.
As used in the text, the word "liturgical" is borrowed from Richard Jensen, *The Winning of the Midwest: Social and Political Conflict, 1888-1896* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1971), pp. 58-88. It denotes an "inward" theological persuasion, one that holds a pessimistic stance toward realizing the Kingdom of God on earth through political or social action. Jensen's book is an important corrective of the neglect which historians have demonstrated with respect to the ethno-religious dimension in political history.

[16]In his 1848 Synodical Address, C. F. W. Walther, a founding father of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, delivered the following revealing comment: "During the present time our brothers in the faith in most other lands, especially Germany, live under the unrest and confusion of a ravishing disintegration of all existing relationships in church and state. While our brothers elsewhere are banished to merely sighing in the privacy of their bedrooms, we here are able to gather quietly under the shadows of a calm peace to refresh our spirit. Thanks, humble thanks, for this be to him who is eternally so friendly and always full of goodness." Reprinted in translation in *Concordia Theological Monthly*, 43 (1972), 430.

[17]Brief biographies of all the individuals mentioned are carried in W. F. Toensing, comp., *Minnesota Congressman, Legislators, and other Elected State Officials* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historial Society, 1971).

[18]Carl H. Chrislock, "The Norwegian-American Impact on Minnesota Politics: How Far 'Left of Center'?" in Harold S. Naess, ed., *Norwegian Influence on the Upper Midwest* (Duluth: University of Minnesota, 1976), pp. 108-11.

[19]*Minnesota Votes*, pp. 14-15.

[20]See especially the gubernatorial vote from 1896 through 1904 in *Minnesota Votes*, pp. 169-75.

[21]Bryan did reasonably well in the Norwegian-populated counties of the Red River Valley, carrying Kittson, Polk, Clay, and Roseau. However, his showing in Norwegian areas of southeastern Minnesota did not mark an increase in the Democratic vote compared to 1892. Thus, one can assume that Norwegians who voted for him did so for economic reasons.

[22]Kittel Halvorson, Minnesota's first third-party congressman, was elected in 1890 on a Farmers' Alliance-Prohibition ticket. The Farmers' Alliance was, of course, the forerunner of the People's Party: *Minnesota Votes*, p. 80. See also Ridge, pp. 302-03.

[23]Carl H. Chrislock, *The Progressive Era in Minnesota, 1899-1918* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1971), pp. 9-36.

[24]*Minnesota Votes*, pp. 16-17.

[25]*Minnesota Votes*, pp. 175-79; a competent biography of the reform governor is Winifred G. Helmes, *John A. Johnson: The People's Governor* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1949).

[26]Lynn Haines, *The Minnesota Legislature of 1911* (Minneapolis, [n.p.], 1912), p. 6-8.

[27]Haines, pp. 99-120.

[28]See Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I* (De Kalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University, 1974), especially pp. 57-81.

[29]Translation in *Brown County Journal* (New Ulm), Sept. 12, 1914, p. 4.

[30]Chrislock, *The Progressive Era*, pp. 70-71, 95-98.

[31]See C. F. Wittke, *German-Americans and the World War* (Columbus: Ohio State Archaelogical and Historical Society, 1936). p. 3.

[32]Theodore Roosevelt fully explicated his anti-hyphenism in a book titled *Fear God and Take your Own Part* (New York: Geoge H. Doran, 1916). For a Wilsonian statement on the same issue, see Ray Stannard Baker and William E. Dodd, eds., *The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson: The New Democracy* (New York: George H. Doran, 1926), 1:390. For exerpts from an address by Elihu Root, see *Minnesota Mascot*, Feb. 4, 1916, p. 4.

[33]p. 14.

[34]July 16, 1916, editorial section, p. 2. For a Norwegian-American reaction, see Odd S. Lovoll, ed., *Cultural Pluralism Versus Assimilation* (Northfield, MN.: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1977), pp. 77-120.

[35]Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917* (New York: 1954), pp. 244-51.

[36]For an account of the 1916 campaign in Minnesota, see Chrislock, *The Progressive Era*, pp. 119-29. In the Frank B. Kellogg Papers (Minnesota Historical Society) there is correspondence between Charles J. Moos and Kellogg with respect to the German vote. Moos, whose special function was mobilizing the German press, reported that he had succeeded in securing "the support of every german (sic) paper in the state" for Kellogg and, presumably, Hughes: Moos to Kellogg, undated, 1916, Kellogg Papers. On the eve of the election, however, Moos developed anxieties concerning the German vote for Hughes. German-Americans, he noted, preferred Hughes personally to Wilson, but they feared the former would "be so dominated by Roosevelt, Root, Lowden, etc., that he will be even more pro-Allied than is Wilson." Moos to Eric L. Thornton, Oct. 19, 1916, copy in Kellogg Papers.

[37]*Minnesota Laws*, 1917, p. 374.

[38]*A History of Minnesota*, 3:556.

[39]Chrislock, *The Progressive Era*, pp. 130-31.

[40]On the Nonpartisan League see Robert L. Morlan, *Political Prairie Fire: The Nonpartisan League, 1915-1922* (Minneapolis: 1955). On Van Lear, see David Paul Nord, "Minneapolis and the Pragmatic Socialism of Thomas Van Lear," in *Minnesota History*, 45 (Spring, 1976), pp. 2-10. On the Range situation, see Neil Betten, "Riot, Revolution, Repression and the Iron Range Strike of 1916," in *Minnesota History*, 41 (Summer, 1968), pp. 82-94.

[41]Franklin F. Holbrook and Livia Appel, *Minnesota in the War with Germany* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1932), I: 50.

[42]Minnesota Commission of Public Safety, *Report* (St. Paul: 1919), p. 32. For a detailed account of the Safety Commission's policy toward German-Americans, see Sister John Christine Wolkerstorfer, "Nativism in Minnesota in World War I; A Comparative Study of Brown, Ramsey, and Stearns Counties, 1914-18." Diss. University of Minnesota, 1973.

[43]Chrislock, *The Progressive Era*, pp. 140-43; The *Princeton Union* comment was carried in the issue of Aug. 16, 1917, p. 4. For accounts of the July 25 rally from divergent points of view, see *Brown County Journal*, July 28, 1917; *New Ulm Review*, Aug. 1, 1917, and *Minneapolis Journal*, July 26, 27, 1917; all p. 1.

[44]Chrislock, *The Progressive Era*, pp. 148-53; see also Belle Case La Follette and Fola La Follette, *Robert M. La Follette* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), II, 762-68.

[45]Walter E. Quigley, "Out Where the West Begins." Unpublished manuscript in the collection of the Minnesota Historical Society, p. 26.

[46]Bruce L. Larson, *Lindbergh of Minnesota: A Political Biography* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), pp. 215-49. Carol Jenson, "Loyalty As a Political Weapon: The 1918 Campaign in Minnesota," in *Minnesota History*, 43 (Summer, 1972), 42-57.

[47]*Legislative Manual*, 1919, p. 252. The vote was Burnquist, 199,325; Lindbergh, 150,626. (Hereafter, *Leg. Man.*)

[48]On Calderwood-Nelson contest, see Chrislock, *The Progressive Era*, pp. 175-77.

[49]*Minnesota Votes*, pp. 35, 183-84.

[50]For St. Paul vote, see *Leg. Man.*, 1919, p. 624.

[51]*Leg. Man.*, 1919, pp. 222, 646. In the final election St. Martin returned 5 votes for Burnquist, 5 for Wheaton, 1 for the Socialist candidate, and 131 for Evans.

[52]*Leg. Man.*, On the state prohibition amendment included on the 1918 November ballot, St. Martin voted negatively by 124 to 13. The vote in Brown County on the amendment was 2,607 no and 1,384 yes; the vote in Sibley was 1,934 no and 1,174 yes: *Leg. Man.*, pp. 528, 644. Both counties, as noted, returned a majority for Calderwood. Kandiyohi County, dominated by the Scandinavian vote, favored the prohibition by a vote of 2,577 to 1,349; *Leg. man.*, p. 578.

[53]The returns for these cities and villages may be found in *Leg. Man.*, pp. 98, 100, 218, 528, 532, and 642. It should be pointed out that the NPL sweep of German-American villages was not complete. In Sibley County, Arlington township voted for Lindbergh by a margin of 150 to 23, while neighboring Arlington village returned 89 ballots for Burnquist and 60 for Lindbergh: *Leg. Man.*, p. 220.

[54]*Minnesota Votes*, pp. 20-21, 36-39, 186-88. On La Follette's appeal to German-American voters in 1924, see Samuel Lubell, *The Future of American Politics* (New York: Harper, 1952), p. 140. In analyzing La Follette's overwhelming margin in the Wisconsin senate race of 1922, Richard N. Current writes: "The votes came from a remade constituency . . . composed in part of old-time progressives . . . [and] also included a new element, a large body of German-Americans who now saw him as a champion of civil rights and ethnic self-respect.": *Wisconsin: A Bicentennial History*, p. 203.

[55]Fritsche was a contender for the Farmer-Labor nomination in the special senatorial election of 1923 and for the governorship in 1924. He lost both bids: Larson, *Lindbergh of Minnesota*, pp. 271-74, and George H. Mayer, *The Political Career of Floyd B. Olson* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1951), p. 29. In 1930 he was successful in gaining the Farmer-Labor nomination for congress from the 2nd district, but lost the final election. *Minnesota Votes*, p. 111. .

[56]The gubernatorial returns from 1926 through 1936, on which the generalizations in this paragraph are based, are carried in *Minnesota Votes*, pp. 188-96. On Olson's relationship with the Democratic Party and the New Deal, see Mayer, pp. 49, 97-98, 101, 240-41.

[57]See George W. Garlid, "The Antiwar Dilemma of the Farmer-Labor Party," in *Minnesota History*, 40 (Winter, 1967), 365-74, and Barbara Stuhler, "The One Man Who Voted 'Nay'; The Story of John T. Bernard's Quarrel with American Foreign Policy, 1937-39," in *Minnesota History*, 43 (Fall, 1972), 83-92.

[58]The Henrik Shipstead Papers in the Manuscript Division of the Minnesota Historical Society contain many letters to Senator Shipstead from German-American constituents lauding the senator for his isolationist stance and expressing fears that American intervention in Europe would lead to a repetition of 1917-18. Such letters are particularly numerous for the years 1939-1941.

[59]*Minnesota Votes*, pp. 195-97.

[60]*Minnesota Votes*, pp. 22-24. In 1936 William Lemke's Union Party, a third-party movement backed by a coalition including the followers of Huey Long and Father Charles E. Coughlin, polled a larger percentage of the total vote in Stearns County than in the state as a whole. For an interpretation of this phenomenon, see Lubell, pp. 143-44.

[61]In the state as a whole, Nelson polled 14% of the vote. In Brown County he drew 31%; in Carver, 46%; in Sibley, 28%; and in Stearns, 19%: *Minnesota Votes*, pp. 48-49. In the Presidential race of 1944, Thomas E. Dewey prevailed over FDR by a vote of 7,018 to 2,842 in Brown; 5,823 to 1,565 in Carver; 3,326 to 2,786 in Scott; 4,311 to 1,683 in Sibley; and 13,298 to 8,647 in Stearns: *Leg. Man.*, p. 24.

[62]*Leg. Man.*, pp. 25, 50-51, 132. In the elections immediately preceding 1948, Stearns had returned heavy majorities for Knutson: *Leg. Man.*, pp. 128-30.

[63]The last electoral contest in which such a bloc is clearly discernible was the 1946 G.O.P. primary when Senator Henrik Shipstead, who had cast one of two senate votes against the United Nations charter, was challenged for renomination by Governor Edward J. Thye. Thye won decisively, polling 238,210 to 160,619 for the incumbent. However, Shipstead carried the hard-core German counties — Brown, Carver, Scott, Sibley, and Stearns: *Leg. Man.*, 1947, pp. 174-75. In the 1950s — especially from 1954 and on — these counties did not follow a uniform pattern. Brown, Carver, and Sibley generally favored Republican candidates; Scott returned to its old Democratic allegiance; Stearns usually voted Democratic, but sometimes went Republican: *Minnesota Votes*, pp. 50-61, 204-18.

Albert Scheffer, state legislator, St. Paul, 1887-89.

The Motives of German Immigration

by William L. Cofell

My own findings in this area of investigation are so close to Chrislock's that I find it difficult to be critical of his paper. He studies the extent of political office seeking among German-Americans and examines voting behavior in Minnesota German communities. The materials and documents I have seen and my own evidence from research leads me to conclusions that parallel his very closely. If participation of ethnic groups in the political processes has been less than expected, then in some way this behavior should be examined. So I will devote my attention to some of the questions that puzzle us today, and perhaps suggest some areas for further examination.

There are a couple of minor items in Chrislock's paper about which I have information. Since he mentioned that Eugene McCarthy's mother was of German extraction, I would like to add that David Durenberger's mother is of Polish origin (her name was Cebulla). The second minor point is the source of the Democratic vote in Stearns County in the 1860 election. I am not sure the German vote accounts for all the Democratic vote in that year. There was a contingent of pro-slavery Southerners occupying Northtown, St. Cloud in 1860. I think the Germans may have voted Democratic, but I believe the vote itself was increased by the presence of Southern settlers. Some members of this contingent were suspected of tossing the printing press of Jane Grey Swisshelm into the Mississippi River on the night of May 24, 1858. It was General Sylvanus Lowry who had been singled out and attacked by Mrs. Swisshelm for his pro-slavery views.[1]

One of the first things that strikes me in examining the participation in politics and the voting behavior of the German population is the widespread belief that German-Americans were not politically active. This common belief is not of recent historical origin, and this impression about the lack of contributions of the German-American ethnic group is not confined to Minnesota.

I would like to quote a few authors and their comments in order to present a perspective of the history and content of these views. The first one appeared in an article published in 1888, entitled "German Life and Culture in America":

> That an intelligent community of such extent must produce literature goes without saying, but how few of the greatest names have gained a national reputation.[2]

An article published in 1903 seems to repeat the theme:

> The German in America has not produced many great men, but he has filled the country with good men, which is infinitely better. The cause of the dearth of prominent German-Americans is due to the fact (in some measure at least) that they blend more quickly than any other foreigner (except the Scandinavians) with the Nation's life, especially if the German reaches any kind of eminence, and the effect which he has upon the life of the Nation is difficult to trace just because of that.[3]

Another author takes a slightly different point of view when he writes in 1907:

> From the earliest times German names shed luster upon the country. There have been fifteen governors of States, five United States Senators, and over 100 members of the House, of German blood. This showing, though not large in proportion to the number of Germans, indicates, at any rate, that they *can* attain these positions if they *want* to. One reason that so few German names appear in politics is that, "to the German, with his ideals and his sense of propriety, the thought of making a business of politics is repellant."[4]

This writer also adds that the Germans appear to become involved in politics when "great issues are at stake," particularly those touching themselves, their families, and their culture.

It is interesting to note the different bias that appears among the writers after the emergence of the "Plunderbund" referred to by Chrislock:

> As to municipal government, the Germans remembered the model administration of the cities in Germany, and naturally regarded with shame and indignation the semi-criminal combination for municipal plunder which were organized in various cities, generally calling themselves "Democratic," and in which the Irish element predominated.[5]

In contrast to the preceding we find another author who makes a different interpretation of the German contribution to political and social life:

> Another thing which this vast German population has failed to impress upon our cities is the love of law and order which

characterizes it in its native home, and almost without exception it stands arrayed against any attempt to curtail the privileges of the saloon and lawmakers, and officials are usually kept from enforcing existing laws by their fear of the German vote.[6]

Or one more opinion:

Whatever their differences may be on other points in these questions the German-American may always be counted on as unitedly and grimly determined to protect both the sanctity of family life and the liberty of the individual.[7]

The preceding six quotations all date back more than 70 years ago, yet I think they contain elements that help us understand and perhaps interpret present day ethnic behavior. It seems to me that I have seen these same elements persisting in Stearns County. It is my observation that there is participation, but at the local level rather than in the state and national political arena.

Concern about Local Issues

As an active participant in the political process in Stearns County since the election of Fred Marshall in 1948, I have observed that the people become particularly concerned (and sometimes incensed) about those political issues they sense as affecting family, school, church, local community, and local custom and autonomy. Such issues as abortion, ERA, aid to families with dependent children, assistance for the handicapped, sex education, the family farm, including power lines, are supported or opposed because of their effect or supposed effect upon the sanctity of the family and/or the local community.

Certain political decisions made by agencies beyond the community — legislatures, congress, the constitution, and corporations — have produced particularly intense reactions in Stearns County. Viewed as unwarranted imposition by outside agencies were prohibition, school consolidation laws, the 1919 law barring use of non-English languages, and legislation interpreted as being antagonistic to parochial education; perhaps the most recent example is a corporate decision to build a power line across part of the county.

The focus of political activity in this area is somehow different than elsewhere: the family, neighborhood, community, church, local customs receive more attention. The activities and relationships that sustain a person within these circles must be fostered and preserved. Higher level politics may be viewed with suspicion, doubt, or even hostility. It is viewed as being opposed to or disruptive of local goals and aspirations. This is accompanied by a sense of futility of attempting to guide or control events or the outside political system.

I suspect that some of these attitudes have a traditional element in them. It may be that many German settlers came from levels of society in Germany in which political participation was minor. Government seen as an imposition might well be one of the results of the Bismarck period.

I do not at present know how to interpret some of the data. The candidates list for county offices for several election years reveal that most of the candidates have German names. Yet is it also clear that Germans in Stearns County were not averse to voting for non-Germans. Senator P. A. Hilbert was of French origin, as was Dubois, who carried Stearns County over Lindbergh in 1914.[8] Hilbert was defeated by Loonam, a Nonpartisan Party candidate, in 1918.[9]

Perhaps it is necessary to make a distinction between public participation and political participation, and question whether either is very closely associated with values. Our annual community credit union meeting attracts a large group of people. The local cooperative associations, once active in Stearns County, attracted large numbers to their annual meetings. I have noted the interest and energy people devote to ASCS, the Agricultural and Soil Conservation Service. It seems to me that conscientious, devoted attention is given by people elected to administer these agencies or organizations. I also suspect that many of them would not aspire to higher office.

Chrislock's study alerts us to the necessity of examining the political facts of ethnic participation in the political process. If it is necessary that ethnic groups vitalize the political processes at a level different than in the past or present, then we may need to attend to the political education of youth. It may be that we need to know more of the history of ethnic experiences in this country. Why would a writer in 1909 make the following comment?

. . . But they are substantially agreed that the German element has not sufficiently asserted itself, nor has it made the proportionate impress on American institutions and civilization.[10]

As mentioned previously, the German political experience before leaving Europe must be understood: I think it has something to do with political participation in this country. In addition, I believe we must examine more carefully the situation encountered on arrival in this country: the experiences of many groups in this country have made adjustment and participation more difficult. The process has not been easy for Blacks, Chicanos, Indians, Germans, Italians, Bohemians, Poles, Orientals, and many others.

In America we have inherited all the oppression problems of Europe and out of them we are trying to build up a cooperating democracy in which men may rise to their full human dignity.[11]

European Persecution of Catholics

Our histories have well informed us that the English Puritans came to this country to escape religious persecution and to seek religious freedom. I do not think the emphasis has been so clear regarding the persecution of German Catholics under Bismarck.

The oppressive conditions under which the Poles existed as a part of Prussia or Russia have received little attention. There was widespread religious and language persecution in Europe in the nineteenth century, and I believe it was an important factor in immigration to America.

In January of 1875 at least five Catholic bishops were in German prisons: the archbishops of Posen and Cologne, the bishops of Treves and Paderborn, and the co-adjutor bishop of Posen. Fines were imposed upon all of them, and upon the bishops of Münster, Hildersheim, Breslau, Culm, Ermland, and on all the bishops of Prussia except Osnabruck. In addition, 1,400 priests were fined or imprisoned, and about one hundred driven out of the country.[12]

The situation for the Poles immigrating to this country contains elements of irony. Efforts to repress both the Polish language and Polish religion was carried on by Russia and Prussia. One resident of Stearns County, speaking of his Polish experience, says:

> I had a teacher ask me, 'What do the small schools teach in Poland?' In Poland, they don't want to learn German. They don't want to know Russian. They stick with them around school. Then there are no schools. My aunt started a small formal school. My mother teaching in the house. People came to the house. She teached them ABC's and so forth in Polish.[13]

It must have been confusing to some of these immigrant people to arrive in America and find themselves and their children under pressure to acquire another language and become Americanized. They also found themselves somewhat under pressure from the "nativist American" because of their adherence to the Catholic Church.

I doubt that we have measured very accurately the persecutory behavior of the American Nativist movements on immigrants. The attempts at Americanization probably produced in many cases a sense of inferiority rather than acceptance as a member of American political society. My interviews in Stearns County lead me to believe that we have not yet lived down the resentments, hostility, anger, and complexes induced by actions of the State Public Safety Commission during World War I. In the interviews I conducted during the past summer this was mentioned several times as the source of distrust of outside agencies. The *halt's maul* response of keeping quiet, of not responding in situations where the outsider is not yet trusted, still persists.

Political heritage and cultural heritage are not exactly the same thing. To believe that one must be Anglicized to participate in the political system is a false premise. To believe that one must be a reasonable facsimile of a New England Puritan to be an acceptable American citizen betrays the dream of the democratic political process. Any attempt to cause people to deny their heritage presages a loss of roots. Nineteenth century European immigrants could have been dealt with in ways that would have increased their pride in their cultural heritage along with pride in their new American citizenship.

If the Pilgrims and Puritans really did come to this country to achieve religious and political freedom, I think it should be emphasized. However, placing sole emphasis on the other motives that brought later arrivals — who came searching for economic opportunity, jobs, land, and escape from poverty — denies something of their motivation and heritage. I believe — after reading many articles about European religious and political oppression of the Poles and Bohemians, and about the oppressions in Germany between 1848-1900 — that these immigrants faced conditions just as severe as *those confronting English* Puritans. At least no one attempted to prohibit the use of the English language!

The economic motive for immigration is somehow less valued and considered less ennobling than the desire for political and religious freedom. The Puritans have been exalted, perhaps properly so, but the story of later immigrants has been neglected. Some of them had both religious and economic reasons for leaving their European homelands, and their stories should be told honestly. A failure to do so leaves false impressions about them.

If we can believe that later immigrants came only because they were poor and wanted only to better themselves economically, it is a lot easier to believe they could not be interested in political participation as citizens, would not be concerned about matters of political or religious freedom. Some earlier Americans, in fact, believed that the political structure and processes of the United States were threatened by new immigrants using a strange language. It was argued that such new citizens would even seek to impose Old World customs and oppressions on the immigrants who had settled America first.

Perhaps the problem of all immigrants to this country needs to be re-examined from a psychological as well as a political viewpoint.

> The problems of the immigrant has its roots deep in the laws of psychology and can never be solved except through an adaptation of practical treatment to inner impulses which have been nurtured through a long experience with abnormal conditions. The basis of these impulses has been the desire for freedom. I mean by desire for freedom the instinctive impulse for unfettered and therefore normal self-expression.[14]

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Notes

[1]John Dominik and Ed L. Stockinger, *Three Towns into One City* (St. Cloud: The St. Cloud Area Bicentennial Commission, 1976), p. 137.

[2]Rev. J. H. Dubbs, "German Life and Culture in America," *The Reformed Quarterly Review*, 35, No. 4 (1888), 453.

[3]Edward A. Steiner, "The German Immigrant in America," *Outlook*, 31 Jan. 1903, p. 260.

[4]"The German Element in the United States," *Review of Reviews* (American), 35 (May, 1907), 603.

[5]Frederick William Holls, "The German Vote and the Republican Party," *The Forum*, 20 (Jan. 1896), 591.

[6]Steiner, p. 262.

[7]Holls, p. 595.

[8]*St. Cloud Journal Press*, 5 Nov. 1914, p. 1.

[9]*St. Cloud Journal Press*, 14 Nov. 1918, p. 6.

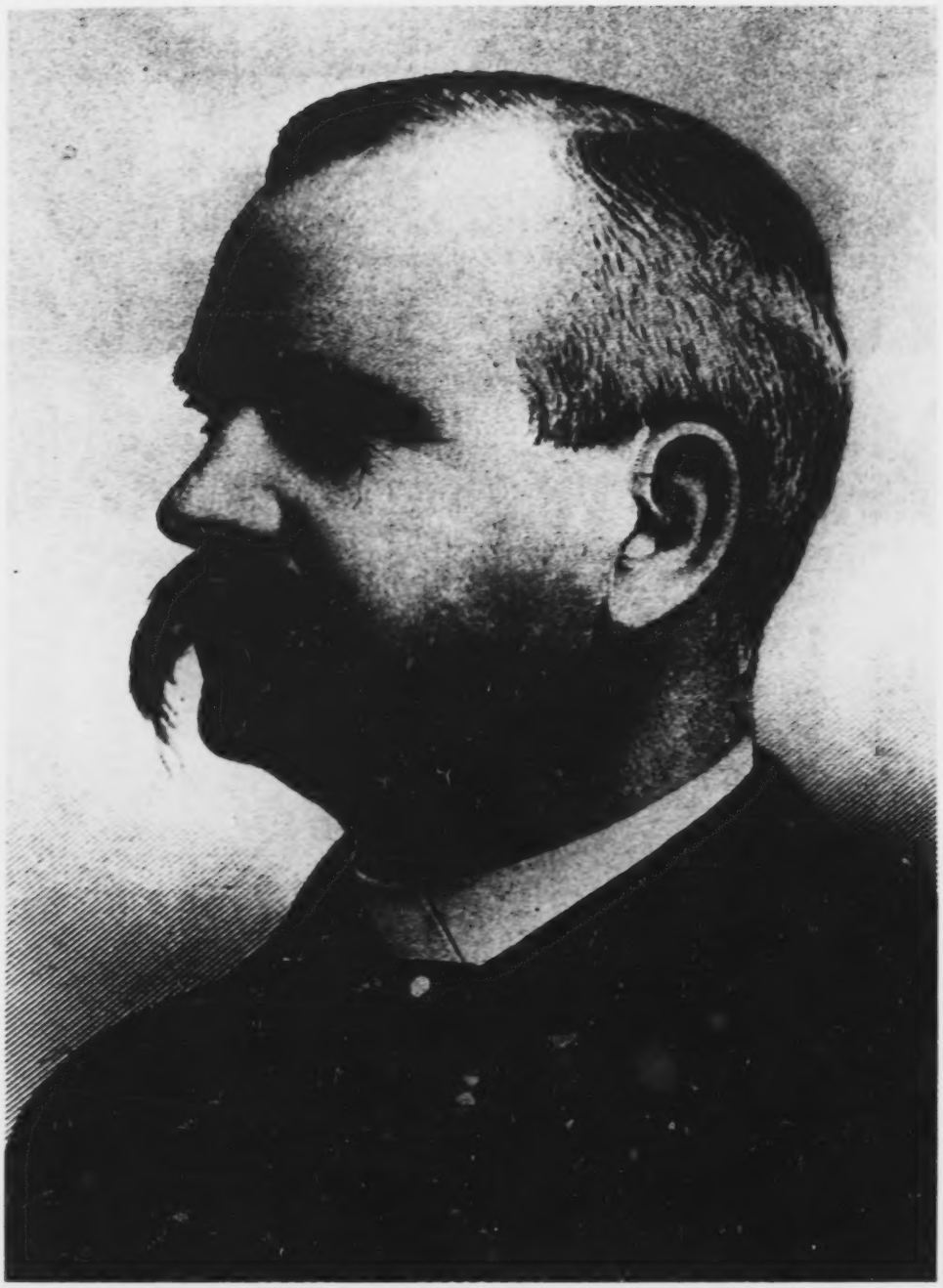
[10]"Germans in America," *Outlook*, 23 Oct. 1909, p. 363.

[11]Herbert Adolphus Miller, "The Oppression Psychosis and the Immigrant," *Annals of the American Academy*, 93-95 (Jan. 1921), 142.

[12]*The Tablet*, 16 Jan. 1875, p. 82. This is the London *Tablet*, a leading English Catholic newsorgan, still published. *The Tablet* had correspondents in Germany during the period of the *Kulturkampf*.

[13]Typescript, Historical Biography Interview, May 14, 1976. On file, Stearns County Historical Society.

[14]Miller, p. 139.



Andrew R. Kiefer, state legislator, St. Paul, 1864; congressman, 1893-97; mayor of St. Paul, 1898-1900.

German Allegiance to the Democratic Party

by Harding C. Noblitt

Perhaps I ought to begin by indicating the perspective from which I comment on Professor Chrislock's very interesting and valuable paper. First, I am admittedly an admirer of his studies of Minnesota politics and am inclined to give a high rating to anything he writes. I recently reread an article he published in 1966 about Minnesota politics during the period of World War I. It was published in *Discourse: A Review of the Liberal Arts* while I was one of the editors of that quarterly.[1] If the passage of thirteen years has affected my views, it has made me value his work more highly. Many of us owe an enormous debt to Professor Chrislock for the difficult, accurate, and time-consuming work he has done. I was therefore very pleased indeed to learn that he had agreed to prepare a paper on the role of German-Americans in Minnesota politics.

My second point of perspective is that of a professor of political science who has a long-time interest in party politics even though it is not my area of specialization. And my third perspective is that of one who has been a practitioner in the field of party politics in Minnesota, with varied degrees of success and failure, for almost 30 years. My biggest "hurrah" was a race for Congress: I was endorsed by a brawling district convention that had to recess for a month before it could finish its work, won a hard-fought primary against candidates not involved in the convention, and then lost to an incumbent by polling 48% of the vote in the general election. I learned that the rewards for taking second place are not great, but the whole experience of political participation has brought me many party honors (and chores), plus a couple of appointments to state boards. Offers of federal appointments were standard for losers in my heyday, but the "ham" in those who go into college teaching makes it difficult for some to give up the assured audience and disappear into the bureaucracy.

Professor Chrislock's paper is an excellent account of a century of German-Americans in Minnesota politics. It will aid all of us who study that state's political history. We can't study everything at once, so this kind of thorough explanation of a specific area makes the task more manageable, and it also suggests other areas that can be explored to further our understanding of the overall picture. His paper has organized what we knew about the German-American's role in Minnesota politics and has added much material that was unknown to most of us even though we had a particular interest in the area. And I am even impressed by some minor facts. I didn't know, for example, that a part of Senator Eugene McCarthy's heritage was German, even though I worked with him on the campaign trail and elsewhere (and sometimes disagreed with him).

Chrislock points out in the first paragraph of his paper what many people have not realized: a rather impressive list of persons with German names or backgrounds have played prominent parts in Minnesota politics. As one looks over a century of political history, it seems likely that during part of that time both Germans and non-Germans were more conscious of the role played by an ethnic group than is now the case. The two present Senators, Boschwitz and Durenberger, elected in 1978, managed to go through the campaign without my ever hearing mentioned, even from the politically active, that they had German names. This supports Chrislock's suggestion near the end of his paper that after 1950 it was not possible to recognize a distinctive German-American role in Minnesota politics. Whatever the divisions have been since then, they seem not to have been along the lines of being German or non-German. If such divisions did occur, they must have been in a scattered and private way. Perhaps one of the few contributions I can make as a reactor is to affirm that my following of politics in the public media and in the unpublicized inner workings of the parties persuades me that Professor Chrislock is correct in saying that in recent years German-American contributions can be identified if one looks for them, but they have not been contributions of a group that was thought of as a separate entity. They are now apparently well enough integrated into the Minnesota population to avoid being looked on with suspicion; and, so far as one can tell, they do not seek to promote their own people statewide purely because they are German.

Without being a compiler of a table of statistics such as one would find in a political almanac, Chrislock has managed to show how German-Americans behaved politically at a time when that was easier to identify that it is at present. This information may refute some of the offhand assumptions we have heard or made about their political inclinations. While a candidate for Congress I campaigned over several counties in northwestern Minnesota in the company of an Irish Catholic friend who was a long-time political activist and several times an office holder. We called on priests in a number of towns. He told me that one can almost always identify the political preferences of a priest from his name. If he has an Irish or French name, the odds are, he said, that the priest is Democrat. If he has a German name and comes from southern Minnesota, then he is more than likely a Republican. I was glad to have that explanation because in previous contacts it had seemed to me that quite often the

monsignors and bishops were Republicans and the parish priests Democrats, so I was about to conclude that the political divisions in the hierarchy were along the lines of management and labor. But he claimed that nationality was the determining factor. Perhaps he would have been less certain had he read Chrislock's paper.

The observation that tensions were caused between the Republican Party and German voters in Minnesota by the issue of prohibition is well taken. James L. Sundquist, in his *Dynamics of the Party System*, [2] points out the same tension in a number of other states — tension that probably reduced the number of German recruits to the party.

Subjects for Further Study

Professor Chrislock's paper reminds one of a number of matters that may not have been studied fully. I'd like to give examples of these. A suggestion that some study could be made of them is in no way a criticism of the paper but rather a tribute to its usefulness. Of course Chrislock may very well have studied some of the items mentioned and they don't fit into the confines of this particular paper. I want to suggest some, even though they don't fit, on the chance that they might serve as a basis for other studies. In any case, they are matters his paper reminds me to wonder about. I might even work on some of them myself sometime. But if they are really worth doing, I hope Professor Chrislock will do them.

The paper notes that in the early days of the Republican Party it was sometimes thought to be less hospitable to immigrants than was the Democratic Party, partly because some of the elements that coalesced into the new Republican Party had nativist tendencies. Some prominent Republicans had been members of the nativist Know-Nothing movement that existed during and prior to the 1850s. While it was not necessary for Chrislock to say so in his paper, I wonder if there was any Know-Nothing activity in Minnesota, and I wonder if it would be possible to find out. The accounts of the movement I have seen do not mention Minnesota, but some Know-Nothing activity may have extended into the new state. If so, its presence would have provided a more immediate influence on the mid-nineteenth century party affiliations of German immigrants.

Another interesting point in Chrislock's paper that suggests a study — if it hasn't been made already — comes from the account of the agitation, particularly in the 1880s and 1890s, over the language issue in the schools. There was a tendency to require all schools, public and private, to carry on instruction in English in the basic subjects. At present we again have a controversy in the country over the language issue, stemming from the attempt to require some instruction in a language other than English for various groups. Chrislock would certainly do justice to a history of the language issue in the schools, with its varoius ramifications from the nineteenth century to the present.

The paper mentions some differences in the political outlooks of liturgical Germans (usually Catholics and Lutherans) and other Germans. Sundquist discusses the political behavior of pietists and liturgicals in the nation generally in the political realignments of the 1890s. He says that the Republicans made more gains among the liturgicals who shifted parties than did the Democrats — and that the Democrats made more gains among the shifters who were pietists.[3] What political role was played, if any, by the Germans who had some denominational affiliation other than Catholic or Lutheran? Were there many Germans in other denominations? If so, what was their political behavior?

While the paper mentions German interest in Populist, Progressive, and other reform movements, there is little mention of any German interest in socialism as such. Presumably some of them would have been familiar with socialist traditions in Europe, and one wonders if any signs of these interests appeared in Minnesota. There was a belief in the nineteenth century that some German-Americans had socialistic tendencies. George Washington Plunkitt of Tammany Hall probably represented this view when he complained about the civil service law causing a young Irishman to go wrong.

> There was once a bright young man in my district who tackled one of these examinations. The next I heard of him he had settled down in Herr Most's saloon smokin' and drinkin' beer and talkin' socialism all day. Before that time he never drank anything but whisky. I knew what was comin' when a young Irishman drops whisky and takes to beer and long pipes in a German saloon.[4]

This perhaps portrayed a view widely held in the East. Was there any significant interest in socialism among Minnesota Germans? If not, were they different from Germans elsewhere in America?

It is noted that there was some unwillingness among German Democrats in the solidly German counties to support Bryan, their party's Presidential nominee, in 1896. Was this possibly caused in part by their clergy? It seems that the clergy in some parts of the country opposed Bryan's "easy money" as dishonest.

One issue that surfaced before World War I on which German-Americans may have had a distinctive view was that of woman suffrage. In Samuel Lubell's book, *The Revolt of the Moderates*, he points out that some of the German counties in Wisconsin were very much opposed to woman suffrage as shown in a referendum in 1912: the vote was about 25% in its favor, while the Scandinavian counties favored it by 49%.[5] I have not found any record of woman suffrage agitation in Minnesota and wonder if the issue was ever faced in a way that would enable one to determine whether or not German sentiments differed from those of other nationality groups.

In both Chrislock's findings and in Lubell's account of the German counties in Wisconsin, it appears that international developments, such as World War I, played a considerable role in weaning the Germans away from the Democratic Party and making them more inclined toward the Republican Party.[6] In Minnesota in the decades of the 1920s and 1930s some of the shifting Germans were more inclined toward the Farmer-Labor Party than to the Republicans. War

Julius Schmahl, secretary of state, 1907-21; state treasurer, 1927-37, 1939-51.

was the kind of event that could shake them from their traditional political moorings, and if they began to return in the 1930s, World War II could shake them loose again. According to Thomas A. Bailey's account of the 1916 election, the Republican Party had a difficult problem in trying to deal with the World War I issue in such a way as to keep the support of ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, who was violently pro-Ally, and at the same time try to woo the German-American element. Candidate Charles Evans Hughes apparently did the best he could. This led to his being called Charles "Evasive" Hughes and to the quip that he had left the Supreme Court bench for the fence.[7]

Democrats Became the War Party

Anti-German behavior, much of it officially sanctioned in Minnesota, was a traumatic enough experience to modify previous political inclinations and affiliations. Nationwide, a group called the American Protective League, perhaps numbering almost 250,000, was made up of volunteers who wanted to look for spies and do similar chores for the war effort. It appears that for a small sum a member could get a badge which gave the appearance that he was part of the official Secret Service.[8] In Minnesoa, I wonder if the Commission of Public Safety replaced the American Protective League, or were there two separate organizations chasing the disloyal, or were they intermingled? The work of the Commission of Public Safety, as described in the paper, was outrageous by present day civil rights standards. I wonder if there were any court challenges to the work of the Commission, either during or after the war. If not, it might well appear to those who felt persecuted, such as the German-Americans, that they should modify their previous political behavior. In their minds, of couse, no matter who ran the Commission in Minnesota, the war and related developments probably would be associated more with the Democratic than with the Republican Party.

If one looks at the predominately German counties cited by Chrislock (Brown, Carver, Sibley, and Stearns) and compares their Presidential vote in 1916, before we entered the war, with 1920, after the war was over and all the disillusionment had set in, he sees that the Democratic vote dropped drastically and the Republican vote increased dramatically. The Democrats had a drop in the actual number of votes received of almost 50% while the total number of votes cast doubled. Many factors may have been involved, but this suggests that a significant reaction against the Democratic Party had set in as a result of the experiences of World War I.[9]

Chrislock has cited election returns by counties, which is certainly adequate for most purposes. I have done the same. But it has occurred to me that one might, in another study, try to determine whether there were any significant differences between town and farm voting. If indeed there were significant differences

in counties where both town and countryside were predominately German, this would suggest that nationality was not as great a factor as we believe now. If one searched each precinct and separated the town votes from those of the rural areas, he would very likely find that there was no significant difference. Such is the lot of scholars who pursue sometimes obscure points.

There are other approaches also that one might pursue who wanted to make a very detailed study to eliminate the possibility that the observed political behavior was based on factors other than nationality. Different behavior by Germans might be based on their place of residence, their income level, their affiliation with the Catholic or Lutheran faith, or with some less numerous religious body. Generally, if separation could be made by social class or economic status — which would be difficult to say the least — one might discover other significant reasons for the political outlook of Germans. If he should discover that there were no significant variations with respect to these factors, he would have confirmed all the more solidly the belief that their political behavior was due to German nationality or ethnicity. It would be a laborious way to solidly base what seems obvious from checking the county election returns, so why doesn't someone else do it? But there is always the chance that such work would turn up some weak points in the assumptions that both Professor Chrislock and I seem willing to make.

I do not see in Professor Chrislock's paper any estimate of the percentage of the Minnesota votes that were cast by German-Americans in any of the elections. While we can probably estimate with a fair degree of accuracy the percentage of the Minnesota population that is of German origin, Germans would not necessarily make up the same percentage of the voting electorate. To ascertain this, one would need to know if there was a tendency for them to participate in voting more fully or less fully than certain other groups. To get this information may involve a study that belongs to some field of political science or political sociology that is not represented on this panel.

Chrislock has provided a basic study of the German-American role in Minnesota politics. Any of us who try to study it further, or to explore more detailed aspects of it, will do well to use his paper as our starting point.

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Notes

[1]Carl H. Chrislock, "Minnesota Politics in the World War One Period; from 'Consensus' to 'Conflict,'" *Discourse: A Review of the Liberal Arts*, 9 (Winter, 1966), 3-32.

[2]James L. Sundquist, *Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States* (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1973), pp. 68-69.

[3]Sundquist, p. 152.

[4]William L. Riordon, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), p. 16.

[5]Samuel Lubell, *Revolt of the Moderates* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 70.

[6]Lubell, pp. 67-70.

[7]Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, Ninth Edition, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1974), p. 588.

[8]Carl B. Swisher, *American Constitutional Development* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1954), pp. 606-609.

[9]*The Legislative Manual for the State of Minnesota*, 1917, pp. 508-09, and 1921, pp. 524-25.

For 1916			For 1920		
County	Rep. Hughes	Dem. Wilson	County	Rep. Harding	Dem. Cox
Brown	2,078	1,101	Brown	5,841	796
Carver	1,950	960	Carver	5,073	562
Sibley	1,717	973	Sibley	4,198	502
Stearns	4,312	814	Stearns	13,566	1,616

Political Myths and the Realities of Assimilation

by Kathleen Neils Conzen

German-Americans have played only a minor role in the much-publicized ethnic revival of the past decade in the United States. Germany sent more immigrants to the United States in the century and a half after 1820 than any other area of the world; in a 1972 census survey Germany was second only to Britain in the number of Americans — 25.5 million, or about 12 percent of the total population — claiming it as their ancestral homeland. Yet despite such numbers, there are no nationally acknowledged German-American advocates or defense organizations today, no well-subsidized publications, no lobbies for ethnic rights. The 1972 census survey showed little that was distinctive about German-Americans either demographically or economically. As one of the foremost spokesmen for the "new ethnicity," Andrew Greeley, has observed, "If ever an American ethnic group vanished, it is the Germans."[1]

Even if Greeley's epitaph for German-America may be somewhat premature, as this conference itself suggests, any real understanding of the German experiences in America must be able to account for the relative assimilation of German-Americans in comparison with most other groups. It long seemed that if any immigrant group were to persist, it would be the Germans — with their patterns of settlement in intensely German colonies, their elaborate networks of ethnic churches and associations, and their strong consciousness of cultural distinctiveness. Only the traumatic experiences of the World War I years, it may be argued, can explain the disintegration of so strong an ethnic culture. Yet prescient German-Americans at the time, and historians since, have realized that the process of assimilation was already well underway long before the outbreak of war in Europe temporarily revived sentimental attachments to the Fatherland. The children and grandchildren of the founding immigrant generation were "walking strange paths" after the turn of the century, as one Milwaukeean put it; "the future," declared a speaker on German-America at a German colonial congress in 1905, "looks American."[2] In their efforts to explain this process of cultural change, historians have stressed such factors as the types of persons who chose emigration, the timing of their arrival, the kinds of opportunity they found in the places where they settled, the values which they brought with them, and even the security provided by their strong ethnic communities.[3]

But Carl H. Chrislock's excellent paper demonstrates the importance of understanding also the nature and consequences of German political participation in clarifying the process of German-American assimilation. In part, Chrislock uses the Minnesota experience in order to answer an old question: why were the Germans so weak politically? As early as 1847, Franz Löher had plaintively wondered when "the old sour dough of Yankee politics would finally be improved in flavor by the addition of noble German wine?"[4] He and later German leaders could not fail to note that in no state did Germans ever seem to achieve the political offices to which their numbers, their dense settlement patterns, their educated leadership, and the powerful example of the Irish seemingly entitled them. Seldom did politicians pay them much attention, nor was their political image a particularly flattering one, despite the prominence of a figurehead like Carl Schurz. Löher's explanation for this state of affairs was to be echoed frequently: Germans were unfamiliar with the give and take of democratic politics, and too willing to defer to leaders. They were unable to express themselves fluently in English, and they lacked the class of lawyers and judges from which Americans tended to draw their politicians. They were only too willing to set aside all other considerations until they attained financial independence. Most of all, they were plagued by internal divisions which kept them from uniting behind one of their own, and which subjected to shameful maligning any man bold enough to present himself to his fellow countrymen for election.[5]

But as Chrislock shows, the supposed political apathy of the Germans did not prevent them — in Minnesota — from attempting to use their vote toward distinctly ethnic ends. Without figures on relative voter turnouts, the charge of apathy cannot be directly refuted, but it is clear that there was, in Chrislock's words, an "ongoing German-American role" (p. 105) that strongly influenced Minnesota politics. Rather, as he importantly argues (p. 107), a prime reason for the German sense of political powerlessness lay in the fact that the very issues that provoked German bloc voting were those that separated them from the majority position in the state. Lacking the numbers to elect their own statewide candidates — and supporting the Democratic Party owing to the very fact that it opposed the majority — there was little chance for much German office-holding in Minnesota. Nor was the situation very different in most other states. As the Minnesota record shows, issues rather than party loyalty tended to determine the German vote. Indeed, Germans prided themselves on the purity of their political participation as compared with the straight party-line voting of some other groups. But as a result of such voting habits, even where they were in a majority party, that party had few incentives to reward them with ticket positions or patronage. Germans

consequently also became strong supporters of electoral and civil service reform.

Were German-Americans Politically Weak?

Chrislock has thus very successfully used the techniques of voting behavior analysis to dissolve much of the supposed mystery surrounding German-American political weakness. In the past decade or so, a series of careful historical studies of American voting patterns have radically revised our understanding of the motive sources of American political behavior. Most particularly, they have demonstrated the enduring nature of many political loyalties despite changing issues and personalities, the strong role often played by local rather than national factors in establishing those loyalties, and the extent to which ethnicity, religion, and moral beliefs rather than strict economic self-interest have tended to define those local issues during major periods in the American past.[6] Chrislock's paper is very much in this revisionist mold. Although he has not employed the rigorous quantitative analysis found in some of the other studies, he is able to show that there were clearly distinctive voting patterns associated with areas of German concentration; and he suggests, at least by implication, that for German voters in most periods, ethnic and religious issues were more significant than other factors in influencing their votes.

The impressionistic nature of his electoral analysis leaves some questions unanswered, of course. It would be desirable to distinguish areas of German settlement at the township level, and to characterize townships according to dominant patterns of religion, economic base, wealth, and previous voting records, so that the relative role of ethnicity as opposed to other factors could be tested and variations within the German voting pattern dissected more carefully. What factors explain the German areas which voted counter to the German trends, for example? How significant were religious differences within the German voting bloc? Did urban Germans vote like their rural brethren? Chrislock also tends to define issues in national terms; one wonders whether issues or circumstances peculiar to the state added anything distinctively Minnesotan to the political motives of the Germans. How significant, for example, was their relatively early arrival in the state, or the lack of many leaders of the Forty-eighter type, to which Hildegard Binder Johnson has called attention,[7] or the fact that their chief ethnic rivals for Yankee favor were Scandinavians and not, as was so often the case, the Irish?

But far more significant than such quibbles are the broader implications of the German-American political role in Minnesota suggested by Chrislock's paper. For one thing, this and related studies can be seen as challenging the basis for the stereotype of German political powerlessness itself. Certainly Germans, in Minnesota and elsewhere, failed to elect state and national officials commensurate with their numbers, and they did not form political machines on the Irish model. But if the purpose of politics is regarded as the achievement of goals, rather than the pure and simple exercise of power, then the Germans were markedly successful even at the state and national levels. Prohibition (in Minnesota even county option) was delayed until World War I brought a reordering of political priorities, and school language legislation was likewise warded off. Closer examination would undoubtedly reveal other issues where Germans gained their points despite their minority status. It is perhaps even more significant to note that in this period Americans regarded most of the cultural issues which aroused German concern as the business of government at the more local levels,[8] and thus only a closer examination of local politics can really uncover German political efficacy. The Irish used politics for jobs and status, the Germans for cultural defense. To measure them against a common standard of achievement, with the resulting stereotype of German political weakness, is almost irrelevant.

Of course one can argue that the German-American experience in World War I glaringly exposed a real and not an imagined political weakness. Germans were first unable to influence American policy toward Germany, and then were unable to defend themselves from nativist attack. But here two points should be noted. First, as the Minnesota experience shows, the characteristic German political style was issue-oriented and essentially non-partisan, revealing its strength at the ballot box rather than in the smoke-filled room (although the role of the "beer barons" in opposing prohibition through far more organized tactics must be acknowledged). Such a defensive orientation was indeed effective in meeting cultural attacks that might appear from any direction, but it was difficult to mobilize when the focus shifted to the offensive. More centrally, the basic weakness was not so much in political style as in the nature of the German-American ethnic group itself. What unity Germans had ever possessed was always cultural: they were united in fair degree by commitment to a lifestyle, a language, and a common cultural heritage, but divided by religion, region, occupation, and class. They were thus readily split politically by issues that lay outside their common cultural interests — in a fashion that Chrislock may have underemphasized. Although the war was an issue on which many of the diverse groups within German-America could find common ground, the very diversity of the ethnic group, and the tenuousness of the bonds that defined German ethnicity, had already taken the group well along the path of assimilation; so that in the face of wartime challenge, for many it was easier to yield the last outward trappings of German cultlure than to attempt to wield unfamiliar political weapons in resistance.

The Politics of Lifestyle

This raises the further possibility that politics, rather than being peripheral and unimportant to German-Americans as the stereotype would have it, may have played a central role in defining German-America as a conscious, visible ethnic group. American ethnic groups, as John Higham has recently emphasized, are voluntary groups with permeable boundaries.[9] There is an involuntary quality to ethnicity, of course. Insofar as one exhibits ethnic traits one will be linked to the group. But behavior can be modified, associations can be changed. An ethnic

group exists as a group only so long as there is a membership and leadership core that defines those characteristics with which the group is linked and that forms the neighborhoods, societies, and churches to which those desiring to affirm group membership may affiliate. German-Americans used politics to defend the basis of those defining neighborhoods and societies, to defend their right to celebrate as they chose and in the language they desired. Since that basis was a lifestyle which could be changed far more easily than, say, the common dilemmas which defined ethnicity for some other groups, the defining boundaries of German ethnicity were more fragile, and politics thus more central.[10] Politics really gave German-American ethnicity the only public definition it had, given the group's organizational multiplicity. After World War I, as Chrislock shows, although ethnic issues continued to influence German-American voting, such political behavior could no longer legitimately be invoked to define the group, and the last vestiges of the old ethnic structure disappeared. Clearly, it will be important to look more closely at the role played by individual Minnesota German-American leaders in this process.

Finally, Chrislock's analysis of German-American politics in Minnesota raises important definitional issues for anyone wishing to understand the immigrant experience in America. Scholars have tended to use voting behavior as a central indicator of ethnic identity. The implication is that when German ethnic issues ceased to influence voting, as Chrislock argues was the case in Minnesota by the 1950s, ethnicity itself was fading. But what does "ethnic issue" mean in this context? Certainly Minnesotans today recognize that the German background of Stearns County, for example, plays a continuing role in state politics. But the descendants of the original German immigrants have been living in the county for almost 125 years by now. At what point does their distinctive style of political behavior cease being ethnic and become rather religious or regional? Or, if we acknowledge that ethnicity can change its content over time and acquire distinctive regional and religious connotations, as seems reasonable, then we must find ways of distinguishing the newer kinds of regional-religious ethnicity from older notions of ethnicity-by-descent. Only then will we be able to identify systematically, the policial issues that help define the newer kinds of ethnicity as we have identified the older issues — school language legislation is more obviously but perhaps no more significantly ethnic than a power line! And if we do accept ethnicity as a shifting set of basic loyalties derived from descent and affiliation — not as something which one can possess or not possess almost at will — then the concept of assimilation itself needs modification as well.

These definitional issues carry us a long way from the facts concerning German-American politics in Minnesota which Chrislock has outlined for us so well. But it is perhaps appropriate to raise them in this setting. For there are many in Minnesota for whom German descent is still, consciously or unconsiously, a central factor in shaping their lives, whatever the nationwide stereotype of a vanished German ethnicity. Scholarly attempts to clarify the nature of the German experience in America and to derive from it broader theories concerning immigrant assimilation have for too long concentrated almost exclusively on the large German settlements of the cities. As we finally turn our attention to the towns and countryside of the Midwest, we may begin to uncover an ever more complex process of ethnic survival and evolution, which will force us to alter our interpretations not just of German-American politics but of German assimilation as well.

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Notes

[1] *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington, D.C., 1976), pp. 105-6, 117-8; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports: Population Characteristics. Characteristics of the Population by Ethnic Origins: March 1972 and 1971; Series P-20,No. 249, April 1973; Andrew Greeley, *Ethnicity in the United States: A Preliminary Reconnaissance* (New York: Wiley, 1974), p. 117.

[2] Ernest L. Meyer, "Twilight of a Golden Age," *American Mercury*, 29 (August 1933), 463; Dr. Dunker, "Die deutsche Auswanderung in die Städte der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika," *Sonderabdruck aus den Verhandlungen des deutschen Kolonialkongresses 1905*, p. 867.

[3] For a summary of this literature, see Kathleen Neils Conzen, "Germans in American," *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge, Mass., forthcoming 1980).

[4] Franz Löher, *Geschichte und Zustände der Deutschen in Amerika* (Cincinnati, 1847), p. 454.

[5]Löher, pp. 448-54.

[6]For discussions of this literature, see Michael Parenti, "Ethnic Politics and the Persistence of Ethnic Identification," *American Political Science Review*, 61 (1967), 717-26; and Robert P. Swierenga, "Ethnocultural Political Analysis: A New Approach to American Ethnic Studies," *Journal of American Studies*, 5 (1971), 59-79.

[7]Hildegard Binder Johnson, "The Election of 1860 and the Germans in Minnesota," in Frederick C. Luebke, ed., *Ethnic Voters and the Election of Lincoln* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1971), pp. 92-100.

[8]Cf. Morton Keller, *Affairs of State: Public Life in Late Nineteenth Century America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976).

[9]John Higham, *Send These to Me: Jews and Other Immigrants in Urban America* (New York: Atheneum, 1975), esp. 196-246.

[10]One might also note that it was perhaps easier to use politics to defend the right to serve liquor at singing society meetings, for example, than to improve a group's economic situation, as is suggested by John Bodnar's graphic depiction of the Slavic immigrants who finally acquired political power in a Pennsylvania steel town, only to find it meaningless in the absence of economic opportunity; Bodnar, *Immigrants and Industrialization: Ethnicity in an American Mill Town, 1870-1940* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1977).

Volksfest Kulturhaus, 301 Summit Avenue, St. Paul.

Summary
German-American Ethnicity as Strategy

by Willard B. Moore

Today we have been very fortunate to have leading scholars present us with their information concerning the experiences of German-Americans in Minnesota. I will attempt to address the major points covered or implied in this conference, but, at the same time, we must keep in mind the many questions which were raised in the presentations regarding this largest of Minnesota's ethnic groups. Limited by the time constraints which any conference imposes, the scholars today in four fields — ethnicity, material culture, politics, and religion — have described for us the major characteristics and concerns of some of Minnesota's German-Americans as well as the spatial and temporal contexts in which those charactersitics and concerns were an active force.

Father Colman Barry's remarks on religious and language experience and the comments of Professor Chrislock on political life which were amplified by Harding Noblitt were especially comprehensive on the ways in which German-Americans responded to these two aspects of life in Minnesota. German-Americans may not have dominated national politics and they may not have retained their Old World piety, but their political and religious struggles clearly demonstrate their inner concerns. A fierce sense of independence and the need to maintain or have the freedom to determine their own expression of self were characteristic especially when responding to nativist and assimilationist forces. More specifically, this independence manifested itself when institutions outside a "recognizable community" attempted to, and often succeeded in, imposing life styles and values upon people within the community.

This striving for local choice, whether in seeking proportional diocesan representation, maintaining a traditional liturgical language, abandoning log and brick construction for frame housing, or in asserting a preference for or against prohibition laws led to frustration and resentment and, perhaps, hindered potential political careers. These developments also contributed to the common stereotypical image of the German-American.

Yet, this independence ultimately led only partially to the creation of long-lasting, exotic, or radical German-American communities in Minnesota, highly visible as stewards of the "old ways." In fact, Thomas Harvey in his paper argued for research which would assess and explain the German-Americans' rejection of tradition in some sectors of their Minnesota life.

In many ways it was the struggles over retention of the German language and dialects that caused political and religious friction and caused us to see these immigrants as people with national affiliation rather than ethnic identity. This confusion of ethnicity with national affiliation dominated the decades in which John Ireland and other Americanizers — both before and after World War I — forced German-Americans and other ethnic groups toward the unrealistic but nevertheless sought-for goal of homogeneity in the name of social unity and national security.

The point is that things national are not necessarily things cultural. Or, as William Cofell said today, "National heritage is not the same as cultural heritage." In fact, throughout several of the papers presented here, it was noted that Americanizers attacked national affiliations or papal allegiances, thinking that therein lay the major obstacles to national unity. This was especially true during World Wars I and II. History has shown them mistaken, for it was cultural or ethnic forces which maintained psychological and social stability in immigrant communities. Unfortunately for the German-Americans, these forces took the brunt of Americanization attacks and, we are told, eventually eroded into the dominant homogeneous society. We may be too apologetic if we assume that those generations were naive. Basing their actions on an imperfect understanding of the complexity and critical nature of culture and how culture works, economic, political, and religious zealots for the melting pot sought over one hundred and ten years to attain an efficiency at the price of cultural pluralism. As Cofell stated:

> To believe that one must be Anglicized to participate in the political system is a false premise. To believe one must be a reasonable facsimile of a New England Puritan to be an acceptable American citizen betrays the dream of the democratic political process.

Several speakers today touched on the German-Americans' concern about stereotypes and about their hard-fought and frequently lost battles over cultural expression. We learned that from our historical past we select for presentation to others what we deem significant but also what we perceive as acceptable to the dominant society. We select and present *strategically* — that is, differently and consciously in varying situations — one or another aspect of our ethnicity as we would one or another aspect of our total selves. One may choose to be a "German-American" at Christmas but "an American of German descent" at the November polls. Similarly we might present ourselves ecumenically at a P.T.A. meeting but more religiously particularistic in planning a rite of passage such as a Bar Mitzvah or a funeral.

My own experience, more sectarian than ethnic, but nevertheless similar in dynamics, is an example of how each of us has lived a different experience, each reaching back into his past with different eyes. My mother's people were all Quakers who linked me to nearly three hundred years of a particular, if not peculiar, religious tradition in America. From the entire spectrum of the Quaker experience which was possible for me to remember, certain symbolic and special elements are dearer and more vital to me than others: the plain speech of elders during and after First Day meetings; the form and style of traditional Quaker meetinghouses built of brick, stone or clapboard; the belief in the inner light manifested in long, unprogrammed meetings during which anyone may speak if the Spirit moves him. On the other hand, pacifism, simplicity in all parts of my life, and thriftiness are elements that I have not upheld, though others my age do. As Diana Rankin said today, "There are things within us to which we respond. We don't all react to the same symbols." I would add that these symbols in our lives are part of a complex expressive system. The meetinghouse, a particular manner of worship, and a distinctive language syle are all part of a larger picture in which the parts have significant relationships.

This brings us to the question of what lies before us and the manner in which we will deal with our studies of ethnicity. First, as Rachel Bonney has shown, we must see ethnic groups as highly varied, heterogeneous. Within the group called "German-Americans" there are ties with discreet villages and cities, former provinces or regions. In some cases, "Germans" are really Swiss, Bohemians, or Austrians by geographic location; likewise they may be Catholics or Methodists by religious persuasion. The possibilities are many when region and religion are considered over and above language. There is no one description of German-American ethnicity.

Furthermore, within these specific groups are complex networks for expression and communication and modes for sharing traditions which are perpetually reinterpreted. Some traditions have latent or hidden functions, such as participation in a community festival as a rite of testing and acceptance in a social context. Further, no *one* tradition can be studied without relating it to the whole. Professor Rippley illustrated this point in his German American folk architectural survey. Buildings such as smokehouses and barns are closely related to crops and foodways, being built to fulfill a need and changing to meet methodologies and conditions. As Margaret MacFarlane demonstrated, museums of folk cultural artifacts can often be helpful in furthering our understanding of these relationships.

Shared traditionalizing and the ways in which it is symbolically manipulated by ethnics is the specific concern of scholars who wish to work directly with ethnic group members. In Europe teams of geographers, folklorists, linguists, and psychologists have accomplished a great deal in the study of traditions. In the United States, comprehensive work is only beginning. Certainly these efforts, as Diana Rankin, Alan Graebner, and Tom Harvey have suggested, need our support in hopes of completing a balanced picture of cross-cultural information.

We must also remember that ethnic identity is by and large subjectively determined as it is variously used. If this subjective process is to be understood in all its aspects, we must include the people themselves in our work. Studies of ethnicity, therefore, must bring the community members face-to-face with researchers. Questions and answers must flow to and from both parties.

Finally, it has been suggested here that we now must add to the well-established historical data base some systematically planned behavioral studies of ethnic groups. German-American *heritage* encompasses the entire accumulation of life experiences, aesthetic guidelines, and spiritual templates active among German-Americans while in this country, not merely during the passage here as recent European nations nor as residents of the Old World. Furthermore, we should pursue studies not only of those "elite" cultural activities such as music, painting, and poetry (as has been past practice), but also of the folk and popular cultures which these communities manifest. We must also keep in mind that culture or "heritage" is cummulative, constantly being produced and changing. As Elena Bradunas stressed, we need to develop fresh ways of looking at our own ethnicity and cultural expression. Drawing upon older examples or "survivals" is not the most truthful avenue nor the most productive to understanding today's ethnic communities, a point which Hildegard Binder Johnson stressed in her presentation.

The small community study, accommodating the subjective aspects of ethnic identification and symbolic expression, and taking into account all levels of cultural and social behavior and change — elite, popular, and folk — will help us further understand what we already call "a major heritage."

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German-Language Chapel Service at Concordia College October 12, 1979

by Norbert Benzel

Immigrants from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland have been inextricably involved in shaping the social, economic, political, and religious conditions in the New World. Strongly convinced of the notion that each individual can freely practice his beliefs in a free, emerging America, Protestants and Catholics from Central Europe transplanted, supplemented, and enriched their religious heritage in a new nation. Nowhere do we find these hopes and manifestations more succinctly expressed than in the liturgy, the hymns, the prayers, and the sermons of actual Sunday services conducted.

Concordia College was founded by men and women with a deep and abiding faith in their future and their creator. To celebrate and to give thanks to these forefathers, it was felt from the outset that the first conference focusing on German-Americans in Minnesota should also include an all-German chapel service. The following reprint of that service combines Lutheran as well as Catholic elements of Sunday services of the past.

The chapel service was conducted by second and third year German students at this college: Kurt Andersen, Danette Durnan, Sherry Geiszler, Nadine Lehr, Kathy Rutherford, Jutta Seiter, Jo Sueker, and Marcy Zachmeier. The chapel message was given by Norbert Benzel and the Brass Ensemble was directed by Russell Pesola, Concordia College band director. (The actual chapel service was recorded and broadcast over KCCM FM Radio. A cassette is available through Minnesota Public Radio.)

MORGENANDACHT
12. OKTOBER 1979
9 UHR 50
KNUTSON LIFE CENTER
CONCORDIA COLLEGE

Einleitung

Musik, gespielt von dem Concordia Posaunenchor

P: In Namen des Vaters und des Sohnes und des Heiligen Geistes.
Alle: AMEN

P: Die Gnade und der Friede von Gott, unserem Vater, und dem Herrn Jesus Christus sei mit euch.
Alle: UND MIT SEINEM GEISTE.

EIN' FESTE BURG

Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott,
Ein' gute Wehr und Waffen.
Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not,
Die uns jetzt hat betroffen.
Der alte böse Feind,
Mit Ernst er es jetzt meint,
Gross' Macht und viel List
Sein grausam Rüstung ist.
Auf Erd' ist nicht seins gleichen!

Mit unsrer Macht ist nichts getan,
Wir sind gar bald verloren.
Es streit für uns der rechte Mann,
Den Gott hat selbst erkoren.
Und fragst du, wer der ist?
Er heisset Jesus Christ,
Der Herre Sabaoth,
Und ist kein andrer Gott;
Dan Feld muss er behalten.

P: Bevor wir das Wort Gottes hören, wollen wir unser Herz bereiten und Gott um Vergebung bitten.

P: Herr Jesus Christus, du bist vom Vater gesandt, zu heilen, was verwundet ist: Herr erbarme dich.
Alle: HERR, ERBARME DICH UNSER.

P: Du bist gekommen, die Sünder zu berufen: Christus erbarme dich.
Alle: CHRISTUS, ERBARME DICH UNSER.

P: Du bist zum Vater heimgekehrt, um für uns einzutreten: Herr, erbarme dich.
Alle: HERR, ERBARME DICH UNSER.

P: Der allmächtige Gott erbarme dich unser. Er lasse uns die Sünden nach, und führe uns zum ewigen Leben.
Alle: AMEN.

P: Lasset uns beten . . . durch Christus unsern Herrn.

Freitagmorgen Gebet

Herr Jesus Christus, du hast unsere Sünden am Kreuze getragen und unsere Not auf dich genommen. Verleihe uns, dass wir nimmer vergessen, wie teuer wir erkauft sind, und hilf uns, dass wir uns durch das Opfer deiner Liebe trösten und zu einem heiligen Leben in deinem Dienste stärken lassen. Um deines bitteren Leidens und Sterbens willen.

Alle: AMEN.

Das Wort Gottes: Die erste Lesung.

I Korinther 13, 1-7

Wenn ich in den Zungensprachen der Menschen und der Engel reden könnte, aber keine Liebe hätte, so wäre ich ein tönendes Erz oder eine klingende Schelle. Und wenn ich die Gabe erwecklicher Rede besässe und alle Geheimnisse wüsste und alle Erkenntnis, und wenn ich allen Glauben besässe, sodass ich Berge versetzen könnte, aber keine Liebe hätte, so wäre ich nichts. Und wenn ich alle meine Habe an die Armen verschenkte und meinen Leib dem Feuertode preisgäbe, aber keine Liebe hätte, so nützte es mir nichts.

Die Liebe ist langmütig, die Liebe ist freundlich, ist frei von Neid; die Liebe prahlt nicht, sie bläht sich nicht auf; sie ist nicht rücksichtslos, sie sucht nicht ihren Vorteil, sie lässt nicht erbitten, sie trägt das Böse nicht nach, sie freut sich nicht über das Unrecht, sie freut sich vielmehr mit der Wahrheit; sie entschuldigt alles, sie glaubt alles, sie hofft alles, sie erträgt alles.

P: Der Herr sei mit euch.
Alle: UND MIT SEINEM GEISTE.

P: Eine Lesung aus der Apostelgeschichte.
Alle: EHRE SEI DIR, O HERR!

Markus 12, 28-31

Dat trat einer von den Schriftgelehrten heran, der ihnen zugehört hatte, als sie miteinander stritten; und da er wusste, dass er ihnen treffend geantwortet hatte, fragte er ihn: "Was für ein Gebot ist das erste von allen?" Jesus antwortete: 'Das erste ist: "Höre, Israel; Der Herr, unser Gott, ist Herr allein. So sollst du denn den Herrn, deinen Gott, lieben mit deinem ganzen Herzen, mit deiner ganzen Seele, mit deinem ganzen Denken und mit aller deiner Kraft."

Andacht

Morgenandacht
12. Oktober 1979

Es geschah am 12. Oktober 1492. Nach einer 2 monatigen Ozeanüberquerung betrat Kolumbus wieder Festland. Er sollte nie in Erfahrung bringen, dass es nicht Indien war, was er entdeckt hatte, sondern die "neue Welt." — — — Und "niemals hat ein grossartiger Irrtum eine grossartigere Entdeckung gemacht."

Es dauerte nicht lange. In den folgenden Jahrzehnten kamen sie aus aller Herren Länder. Es waren Engländer und Franzosen, Holländer und Iren. Auch Deutsche waren dabei. — — — Und ein ganzer Kontinent wurde letztlich besiedelt.

Was für Männer, Frauen und Kinder waren es, die ihrer Heimat den Rücken zukehrten, die Verwandten zurückliessen, Hab und Gut aufgaben?

Es gab viele Gründe. Sie waren meistens politischer, wirtschaftlicher und ganz besonders religiöser Art. — — Und doch hatten die Gründe einen gemeinsamen Nenner: Es war der grosse Wunsch und das tiefe Bedürfnis, sich in absoluter Freiheit betätigen zu dürfen.

So liessen sie sich nieder in Neuyork, in Pennsylvanien, in Virginien, in Carolina, in Texas und im Mittelwesten. Sie bearbeiteten die Scholle, errichteten Gotteshäuser, gründeten Schulen, gaben Zeitungen heraus, erbauten Dörfer und Städte, bekehrten Indianer zum Christentum. Sie wirkten als Quäker, Böhmische Brüder, Mennoniten, Methodisten, Presbyterianer, Reformierte, Katholiken oder Lutheraner. Sie prakizierten tätige Menschenliebe im Heim und in der Gemeinde, beseitigten rassische und nationale Barrieren. — — Und oft war es schon die erste oder zweite Generation, die sich als etablierte Bürgerschicht in ihrer neuen Heimat ansah.

Sie waren bereit selbst mit der Waffe in der Hand ihre eben erworbenen Freiheiten politischer oder religiöser Art zu verteidigen.

Das Europe des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts horchte auf. Die Zurückgebliebenen erfassete eine Euphorie für die "neue Welt." Auch die Deutschen. Goethe nannte die Republik "ein wundervolles Land, welches die Augen auf sich zog" und bemerkte: "Amerika, du hast es besser als unser Kontinent." Schiller meinte: "Wenn Amerika frei wird, so ist es ausgemacht, dass ich hingehe." Schubart schrieb: "Man sieht augenscheinlich, dass Gott mit diesen Amerikanern ist. Das Land gedeiht allenthalben, der Handel blüht an allen Zweigen, alle Stände sind von der Vaterlandsliebe begeistert, Religion wird als Hauptgrundpfeiler des Staates angesehn, Religion, diese Hüterin der Völker, die sie vor Lastern bewahrt und bei einfältiger Sitte enthält."

Der Strom der Einwandrer hörte nicht auf. Männer wie Henry Mühlenberg, Graf Zinzendorf, und wie sie alle heissen mögen, machten Geschichte. In Minnesota war es nicht anders. Neu-Ulm, Cologne, New Munich, New Germany, usw. — Ortsnamen haben eine Geschichte hinter sich.

Amerika wurde zum grössten Schmelztiegel der Welt. Mit 7-8 Millionen Einwanderern wurden die Deutschen zur völkisch grössten Gruppe. Sie liessen sich in jedem Bundesstaat nieder und integrierten schnell. Reisebe — schreibungen wussten zu sagen: "Wenn man aus Hannover, vierzig Minuten südwestlich von Cincinnati, eine Stunde mit dem Auto fährt, kommt man nach Oldenburg. Dort beachte man einen Wegweiser nach Hamburg, das leicht in etwa 7 Minuten zu erreichen ist. Über Elsass kommt man dann — ohne die Grenze von Ohio zu überschreiten — durch Münster und Neubayern in das Hannover-Settlement . . . Umgangssprache Plattdeutsch, Wege gut."

Als naturalisierter Amerikaner habe ich mir manchmal die Frage gestellt, in wieweit es uns möglich ist, sich des Erbes unserer Vorfahren, sich der Rolle der

christlichen Kirchen in unserer Vergangenheit bewusst zu werden. Ich frage mich, in wieweit wir gewillt sind, uns für dieses Erbe einzusetzen, es zu erhalten, es weiterzugeben — — —. Können wir je die Liebe Gottes zu uns, unserm Volk und Land erfassen?

Dass die Rolle der amerikanischen Kirchen auch heute noch eine wesentliche ist, erfahren wir täglich. Vor nicht allzu langer Zeit durfte ich es auch erfahren.

Ein grosser Krieg hatte sein Ende genommen. Für viele Länder bedeutete es das Jahr Null. Katholische und protestantische Kirchen in der Neuen Welt, waren die ersten, die die grosse Not abzuwenden wussten. Bischof Lilje aus Hannover sagte damals über diese Hilfe aus Amerika: "Wir schulden . . . den christlichen Kirchen Amerikas und darüber hinaus vielen menschlich gesinnten Amerikanern besonderen Dank dafür, wie sie uns geholfen haben. Sie haben es als Christen auf eine Weise getan, die nicht demütigte, denn sie haben nicht aus dem Gefühl der Überlegenheit und falscher Herablassung gehandelt, sondern als Christenmenschen, die wissen, dass ihnen ihr gut von Gott anvertraut ist, und sie darum von der Verantwortung wissen auch dem leidenden Bruder zu helfen." Bischof Meiser aus München erklarte: "Wie viele Tränen sind dadurch getrocknet, wie viele Verzweifelte mit neuem Lebensmut erfüllt, wie viele Kranke dem sichern Tod entrissen, wieviele dahinsiechende Kinder dem Leben wiedergewonnen, wie viele gegen Gott und Menschen verbitterte Herzen mit neuem Glauben, neuer Liebe und neuem Mut erfüllt worden! Nächst Gott, der solche Werke der Liebe geweckt hat, gilt unser Dank all den Amerikanern . . Wir erfahren eine Opferwilligkeit, die uns beschämt, eine Bereitschaft zur Hilfe, die erkennen lässt, dass das Evangelium von Jesu Christo in den Kirchen der Vereinigten Staaten eine Lebenmacht ist."

Die Kirchen Amerikas haben seit dem Beginn unserer Geschichte versucht, christlich und karikativ nach innen und aussen zu wirken. Sie tun es auch noch heute.

Herr, mach uns auch weiterhin zum Instrument deiner grossen Liebe!

NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT

Nun danket alle Gott,
Mit Herzen, Mund und Händen,
Der grosse Dinge tut,
An uns und allen Enden;
Der uns von Mutterleib
Und Kindesbeinen an
Unzählig viel zu gut,
Und noch jetzt und getan.

Lob, Ehr und Preis sei Gott,
Dem Vater und dem Sohne
Und dem, der beiden gleich
Im höchsten Himmelstrone,
Dem dreimal einen Gott,
Wie es ursprünglich war
Und ist und bleiben wird
Jetztund und immerdar.

P Wir heissen nicht nur Kinder Gottes: wir sind es. Darum dürfen wir voll Vertrauen sprechen:

Alle:
VATER UNSER IM HIMMEL. GEHEILIGT WERDE DEIN NAME. DEIN REICH KOMME. DEIN WILLE GESCHEHE, WIE IM HIMMEL, SO AUF ERDEN. UNSER TÄGLICHES BROT GIB UNS HEUTE, UND VERGIB UNS UNSERE SCHULD, WIE AUCH WIR VERGEBEN UNSERN SCHULDIGERN, UND FÜHRE UNS NICHT IN VERSUCHUNG, SONDERN ERLÖSE UNS VON DEM BÖSEN.

P: Erlöse uns, Herr, allmächtiger Vater, von allem Bösen und gib Frieden in unseren Tagen. Komm uns zu Hilfe mit deinem Erbarmen und bewahre uns vor Verwirrung und Sünde, damit wir voll Zuversicht das Kommen unseres Erlösers Jesus Christus erwarten.

Alle:
DENN DEIN IST DAS REICH UND DIE KRAFT UND DIE HERRLICHKEIT IN EWIGKEIT. AMEN.

P: Der Herr hat zu seinen Aposteln gesagt: Frieden hinterlasse ich euch, meinen Frieden gebe ich euch. Darum bitten wir: Herr Jesus Christus, schau nicht auf unseren Sünden, sondern auf den Glauben deiner Kirche und schenke ihr nach deinem Willen Einheit und Frieden. Der Friede das Herrn sei allezeit mit euch.

Alle: UND MIT SEINEM GEISTE.

P: Lasset uns beten.

Luthers Morgengebet

Das walte Gott Vater, Sohn und Heiliger Geist. Amen.

Ich danke dir, mein himmlischer Vater, durch Jesus Christus, deinen lieben Sohn, dass du mich diese Nacht vor allem Schaden und Gefahr behütet hast, und bitte dich, du wollest mich diesen Tag auch behüten vor Sünden und allem Übel, dass dir all mein Tun und Leben gefalle. Denn ich befehle mich, meinen Leib und Seele und alles in deine Hände; dein heiliger Engel sei mit mir, dass der böse Feind keine Mache an mir finde.

Alle: AMEN.

GROSSER GOTT WIR LOBEN DICH

Grosser Gott, wir loben dich,
Herr wir preisen deine Stärke.
Vor dir beugt die Erde sich
Und bewundert deine Werke.
Wie du warst vor aller Zeit,
So bleibst du in Ewigkeit.

Alles, was dich preisen kann,
Cherubim und Seraphinen,
Stimmen dir ein Loblied an;
Alle Engel, die dir dienen,
Rufen dir in sel'ger Ruh:
Heilig, heilig, heilig! zu.

P: Der Herr sei mit euch.
Alle: UND MIT SEINEM GEISTE.

P: Es segne euch der allmächtige Gott, der Vater und der Sohn und der Heilige Geist.
Alle: AMEN.

P: Gehet hin in Frieden.
Alle: DANK SEI GOTT, DEM HERRN.

CHAPEL SERVICE
OCTOBER 12, 1979
9:50 a.m.
KNUTSON LIFE CENTER
CONCORDIA COLLEGE

Prelude

Brass Ensemble: Members of Concordia Band

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.
C: AMEN

P: Grace and peace of God, our Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
C: AND WITH HIS SPIRIT.

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper he amid the flood,
Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe,
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own stength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth his Name,
From age to age the same,
And he must win the battle.

P: Before we listen to God's word let us prepare our hearts and ask God for forgiveness.

P: Lord Jesus Christ, you have been sent by the Father to heal those who need healing. Lord, have mercy upon you.
C: LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON US.

P: You have come in order to call the sinners. Christ, have mercy upon you.
C: CHRIST, HAVE MERCEY UPON US.

P: You have returned to the Father in order to speak for us. Lord, have mercy upon you.
C: LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON US.

P: Almighty God, have mercy upon us. Forgive us our sins and lead us to eternal life.
C: AMEN.

P: Let us pray . . . through Christ, our Lord.

Prayer for Friday Morning

Lord Jesus Christ, you bore our sins on the cross and took our troubles unto yourself. Grant that we never forget how dearly we have been redeemed and help us that we may find solace through the sacrifice of your love, and that we may be strengthened to a holy life in your service, through your bitter sufferings and death.

C: AMEN

The Word of God: The first reading.

I Corinthians 13: 1-7

I may speak in tongues of men or of angels, but if I am without love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal. I may have the gift of prophecy, and know every hidden truth; I may have faith strong enough to move mountains; but if I have no love, I am nothing. I may dole out all I possess, or even give my body to be burnt, but if I have no love, I am none the better.

Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offense. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance.

P: The Lord be with you.
C: AND WITH HIS SPIRIT.

P: A reading from the Holy Gospel.
C: HONOR BE TO YOU, O LORD!

Mark 12: 28-31

Then one of the lawyers, who had been listening to these discussions and had noted how well he answered, came forward and asked him, "Which commandment is first of all?" Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord your God is the only Lord; love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength."

Homily

Chapel Service
October 12, 1979

It happened on October 12, 1492. After a two month long ocean crossing Columbus set foot on land again. He was never to realize that it was not India which he had discovered but a "new world." "Never has a great mistake given birth to a greater discovery."

It did not take long. They came from all sorts of countries during the ensuing decades. There were the British, the French, the Dutch and the Irish. Germans were also involved. — — And finally, an entire continent was settled.

What kind of men, women and children were involved who turned their backs toward their home, left their relatives, gave up their belongings?

There were many reasons. They were, in most instances, of the political, economic and very definitely religious type. — — And still, all reasons had a common denominator: It was the sincere wish and the great desire to live one's life in absolute freedom.

They settled down in New York, in Pennsylvania, in Virginia, in the Carolinas, in Texas and the Middle West. They worked in the fields, erected churches, founded schools, published papers, built villages and cities. They lived as Quakers, Bohemian Brethren, Mennonites, Methodists, Presbyterians, members of the Reformed Church, Catholics or Lutherans. They practiced Christian love in their home and their congregation, removed racial and national barriers. — — And frequently it was the first or second generation that looked upon its members as true Americans in a new home.

They were even willing to defend their newly gained freedoms in the political and religious arena.

People in Europe living in the 18th and 19th centuries listened. Those that had stayed behind were caught up in a euphoria for the "new world." It also happened to the Germans. Goethe called the new Republic "a magnificent country and a magnet for the eyes of the whole world" and commented, "America, you are more fortunate than our continent." Schiller said, "If America gains its Freedom, I'll go there." Schubart wrote, "It is apparent that God is on the side of those Americans. The country prospers everywhere, all kinds of trade flourish, all classes are inspired by patriotism. Religion is looked upon as one of the pillars of state — religion, that guardian of the people which keeps them pure at heart." The stream of immigrants did not abate. Men such as Henry Muhlenberg, Graf Zinzendorf, and many others, made history. In Minnesota we find the same situation. New Ulm, Cologne, New Munich, New Germany, etc. — place names tell the story.

America became the melting pot of the world. German immigrants soon constituted the ethnically largest group. It numbered 7-8 millions. They settled in every state of the Union and adjusted quickly. Travel descriptions read as follows, "After leaving Hannover, forty minutes south of Cincinnati, you travel one hour by car. That takes you to Oldenburg. There you will find a sign directing you to Hamburg, which can easily be reached in 7 minutes. By way of Elsass, you then — without leaving Ohio — through Munster and Neu-Bayern and arrive at the Hannover Settlement . . . Language spoken: Low German, roads good."

As a naturalized American I have sometimes asked myself to what extent it is reasonable to understand the heritage of our forefathers and the role which Christian churches have played in the past. I am asking myself to what extent we are willing to defend this heritage, preserve it, pass it on. Can we ever fathom the love of God toward us, our nation, our land?

Still today, American churches are fulfilling an important role. We experience it daily. Not too long ago I also could experience it. Another Great War had come to an end. For many countries it meant an entirely new beginning. Catholic and Protestant churches in America were in the front in order to help. Bishop Lilje from Hannover said at that time in regard to the help from America, "We owe the Christian churches of America, and many Americans with human compassion besides, thanks for the way they helped us. As Christians they have done it in a way which did not humble us; they did not do it with the feeling of superiority and false condescension, but as Christians who know that their worldly goods are endowed upon them by God and therefore they are aware of the responsibility which lies upon them in assisting their suffering brethren." Bischof Meiser from Munich declared, "Innumerable tears have been dried by this help, many desperate people filled with new hope in life, many sick have escaped death, many ailing children were restored to life, many embittered hearts against God and mankind filled with new faith, new love and courage. Beside God, who has prompted such works of love, we owe our thanks to all Americans . . . Herein we experience the spirit of self sacrifice which puts us to shame; a readiness to help which clearly shows us that the message of Jesus Christ in the churches of America is a power of life."

From the beginnings of our history, our Christian churches in America have attempted to get involved. They are doing it today.

Lord, use us in the future as an instrument of your infinite love!

NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD

Now thank we all our God
With heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom his work rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms,
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

All praise and thanks to God
The Father now be given,
The Son, and him who reigns
With them in highest heaven;
The one eternal God,
Whom earth and heaven adore;
For thus it was, is now,
And shall be evermore. Amen.

P: We are called not only God's children. We are God's children; therefore we can speak full of confidence:

Interior of Holy Trinity Catholic Church, New Ulm, ca. 1910.

C: OUR FATHER THOU ART IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE THY NAME. THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE, IN HEAVEN AS ON EARTH. OUR DAILY BREAD, GIVE US TODAY AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US, AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

P: Save us, almighty God, from all affliction and give us peace in our days. Help us in your mercy and keep us from confusion and sin so that we can await, full of confidence, the arrival of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

C: FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.

P: The Lord said to the Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give unto you. Therefore we ask: Lord Jesus Christ, do not look at our sins but look at the faith of your church and give it unity and peace according to your will. The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: AND WITH HIS SPIRIT.

P: Let us pray.

Luther's Morning Prayer

May God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit grant this:

Heavenly Father, we thank you through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have protected us this night from all harm and danger; and we pray that you will also protect us this day from sin and all evil so that all our deeds might be pleasing to you. For we commit ourselves, our bodies and souls and all we have into your hands. May your guardian angel hover over us so that the devil has no power over us.

C: AMEN

HOLY GOD WE PRAISE YOUR NAME

Holy God, we praise thy Name;
Lord of all, we bow before thee!
All on earth thy sceptre claim,
All in heaven above adore thee;
Infinite thy vast domain,
Everlasting is thy reign.

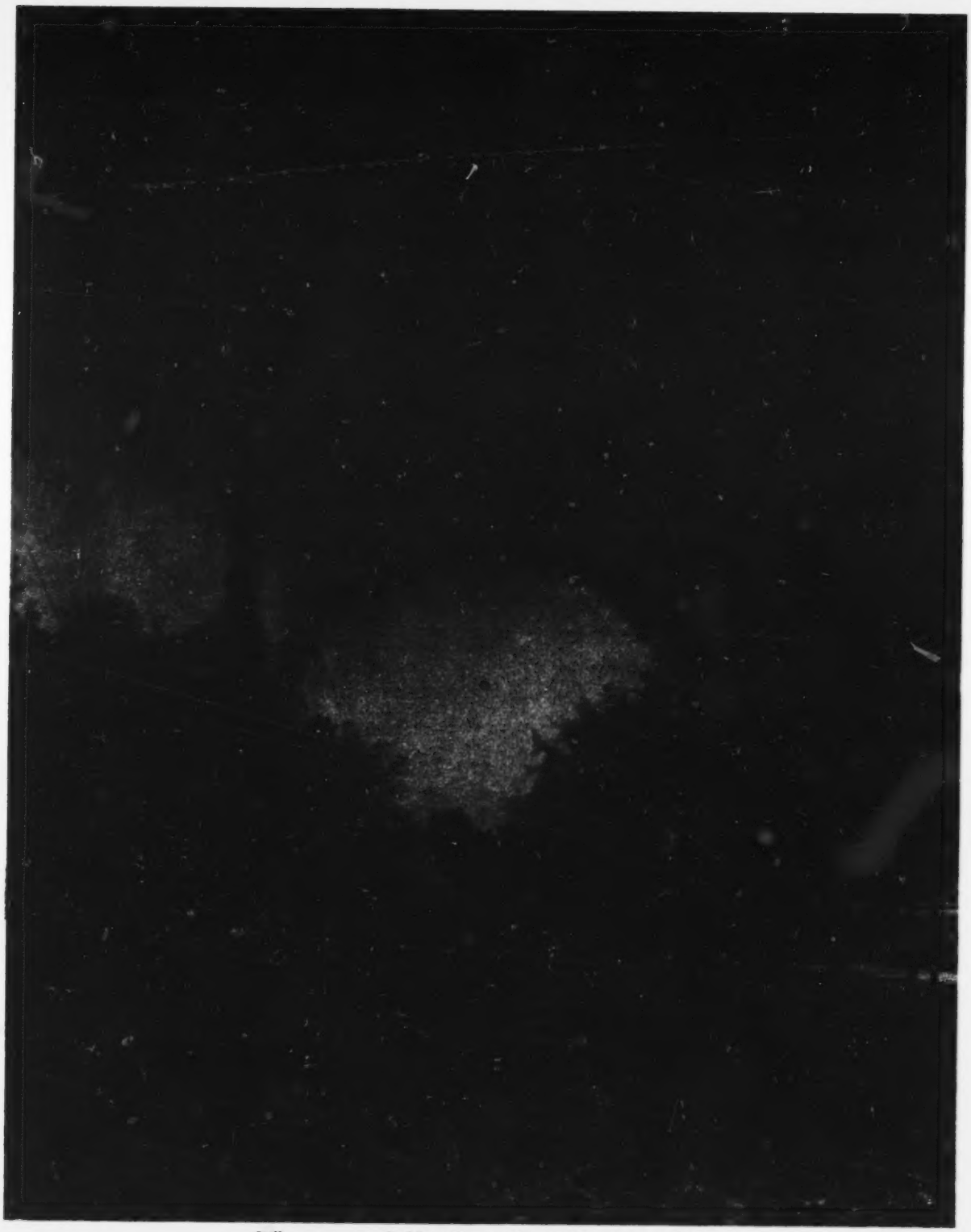
Hark, the loud celestial hymn
Angel choirs above are raising,
Cherubim and seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising;
Fill the heavens with sweet accord:
Holy, holy, holy, Lord.

P: The Lord be with you.
C: AND WITH HIS SPIRIT.

P: Almighty God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost bless you.
C: AMEN.

P: Go in peace.
C: THANKS BE TO GOD, OUR LORD.

Norbert G. Benzel, a native of Stettin, Pomerania (now a part of Poland) fled the Russian advance to Berlin and Dresden, and finally to a Bavarian farm — before migrating to the United States in 1952. He took a B.A. from Hamline University and an M.A. from the University of Minnesota (in 1963). After teaching for two years at Brainerd Community College and doing advanced work at the University of Minnesota, he came to Concordia College in 1963. He has served both as dean of the Concordia Language Villages and director of the University Modern Language Institute in St. Paul. He has a dual research involvement: the story of Nazi Germany, which he experienced in his adolescence, and the German-American experience in Minnesota, which is an important aspect of his teaching.



Stillwater street arched by a German phrase and a cross, ca. 1916.

A Selected Bibliography on the German Heritage in Minnesota

compiled by
Diana M. Rankin

In compiling the bibliography for these conference proceedings, the editors sought to include as many and as wide a variety of resources as possible within reasonable limits. Hence the bibliography is extensive but in no wise complete. It reflects, in general, the catalogued holdings of the Minnesota Historical Society library and archives. Other citations can be located in public and college or university libraries. It was not possible to survey the holdings of the county historical societies and such a survey would yield more listings of memoirs and reminiscences, church records, church anniversary and dedication booklets, plus other items of very localized content. The listings found in this bibliography are, however, indicative of the widespread nature of German settlement in Minnesota and should encourage the search for materials in every county historical society.

Newspaper articles are insufficiently represented. This is difficult material to locate but is of primary importance in doing any study of Germans in Minnesota. In using newspapers, the researcher must be certain to include German-language papers, both secular and religious and from within and outside Minnesota, local town and city papers, organizational newsletters or publications, and the major Minneapolis and St. Paul papers.

This bibliography does not include census records, legislative manuals, or other government documents, even when cited in the conference papers. The editors felt they could not make all the individual listings necessary. Suffice it to say that such materials are primary sources and crucial to any research. Likewise, it was not possible to list all of the many Minnesota county, city, and town histories. Those included in the bibliography were cited in the papers or, as in the case of towns, were specifically related to the German nature of the community.

The listings have been divided into general subject areas, basically following the topics discussed during the conference:

General Works
Immigration History
Local History
Personal Memoirs, Reminiscences, and Letters, including Family Papers
Ethnicity
Emigration, Immigration, Settlement
Material Culture
German Language Press and Literature
Religion
The Language Experience
Politics
Other Cultural Expressions

Some of the listings do not pertain specifically to Germans or to Minnesota, but were included because they suggest areas of research and possible methodologies. Many of the listings could have been included in more than one subject area, but generally the dominant theme of the work determined its location. Therefore, it is essential that the reader use the entire bibliography rather than a single subject grouping.

The editors trust that your research or general reading will be enhanced through the use of this bibliography. The large number of resources listed here, however, does not mean that all the work has been done and all the questions answered. A perusal of them will show that much of the research on Germans in Minnesota is general or several decades old. These writings have laid a valuable basis for more specific research in many areas. It is the hope of the editors that this bibliography will stimulate the re-investigation of Minnesota's deferred heritage.

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